



PHD

The Dynamics of German Remembering

The Rosenstraße Protest in Historical Debate and Cultural Representation

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**The Dynamics of German Remembering: The Rosenstraße Protest
in Historical Debate and Cultural Representation**

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Politics and International Studies

September 2013

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Abstract

This thesis examines patterns of German memory and identity construction as reflected in historical debates around the Rosenstraße protest in 1943 and cultural representations of it since 1990. It positions them within the wider context of debates in Germany on resistance on the one hand and shifting conceptions of national identity on the other. It argues that although the increase in public interest in the protest may appear to be a consequence of unification and the ensuing shift in coming to terms with the past, it in fact precedes them.

Drawing on the work in cultural memory theory of Maurice Halbwachs, Jan Assmann, Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm and others, arguments about the social construction of memory and identity are employed to show how and why patterns of memory, attitudes and ideas about the Nazi past, as expressed through different media of memory, have shifted and how these are tied to conceptions of national identity.

This thesis focuses first on debate amongst historians, before moving on to discuss popular history, biography, film and the different forms of memorialisation. It asks why the protest has become a more prominent feature of cultural memory since unification, and demonstrates that its increased currency is a product of trends in resistance historiography and in Holocaust discourses. It argues that cultural memories are multi-layered and developed in relation to one another. The interplay between these different media is therefore analysed, with particular attention given to who is involved in shaping memories of the protest and why, how these memories and surrounding debates have altered over time, and what this indicates about continuing impact of, and attitudes towards the past. This allows for a consideration of the multiple notions of national identity which these representations foster, and an exploration of how conceptions of identity influence what is remembered.

The question is asked whether the Rosenstraße resistance narrative has, since the 1980s, facilitated the emergence of a more inclusive and a more nuanced remembering, particularly as this narrative highlights the complexities of opposition and attempts to integrate conceptions of Jewish and non-Jewish suffering, centring them within the one narrative. It asks whether these notions are juxtaposed, and whether either victimhood

or German responsibility is relativised. The thesis explores how Germans' relationship with Jews is reconfigured, how German-Jewish solidarity is foregrounded, who is represented as victim, and of what. At the same time, the extent to which a more hybrid sense of identity, one that transcends national and ethnic boundaries, is promoted through the representations of the Rosenstraße protest is also considered.

Lastly, it is argued that the competing representations of events in Rosenstraße which are examined here exemplify the fraught, complex and politicised dynamics of Germany's historical memory, which is characterised by tension between the wish for normalization and the desire to maintain a critical awareness of the past in which opposition may be recognised but accountability is not relativised. The thesis explores which view predominates and speculates whether this is likely to shift in the near future.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
1. Introduction: The Rosenstraße Protest in Historiography and Cultural Memory	1
1.	1
i) Overview of the Events	2
ii) Representations of the Rosenstraße Protest 1945-1990	5
iii) An Overview of Existing Research	7
iv) Resistance Debates and the Rosenstraße Protest	15
v) Identity Debates and the Rosenstraße Protest	21
vi) Normalization and its usage	26
vii) Theoretical Framework and Methodology	28
viii) Thesis Structure	35
2. ‘Der eigentliche Streitwert’: Historical Debate and the Rosenstraße Protest	48
1.	48
i) Contextualising the Emergence of the Rosenstraße Protest in Historical Discourses	55
ii) A Burgeoning Dispute: The Exchange between Nathan Stoltzfus and Christoph Dipper	57
iii) From the mid-1990s to ‘Fakten und Fiktionen’	67
iv) Shifting Patterns of Remembering in the new millennium	69
v) The Second Phase: The Rosenstraße Protest in Historical Debate from 2003	71
vi) Patterns and Parallels in Historical Debate	73
vii) Reconsidering Rosenstraße in the light of Victimological Discourses	75
viii) Chapter Conclusions	83

3. Patterns of Popular History between 1990 and 2002: Shifting Attitudes in Gernot Jochheim's <i>Protest in der Rosenstraße</i>	86
1.	86
i) Writing in Context: Influences and Catalysts	88
ii) Hans Grossmann's Story: A Synopsis	90
iii) Style, Structure and Layout of the Popular History	92
iv) On the Function of Photographs and Excerpts within the narrative	95
v) Thematic Analysis of Hans Grossmann's Story	98
vi) Forms and Function of Anti-Semitism in Hans Grossmann's Story	100
vii) Reconfigurations of German-Jewish Identity	102
viii) Perpetrators, Culpability and Punishment in Hans Grossmann's Story	107
ix) Unity through Solidarity, Suffering and Resistance?	112
x) Evoking notions of a German-Jewish Symbiosis	116
2. Between 1990 and 2002: Additions and Changes to Jochheim's Popular History	119
i) Stylistic and Factual Changes to Hans Grossmann's Story	119
ii) From <i>Protest in der Rosenstraße</i> to <i>Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße: »Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder«</i> : Initial Additions to Jochheim's Popular History	122
iii) From <i>Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße: »Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder«</i> to <i>Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße Berlin 1943: Berichte, Dokumente, Hintergründe</i> : Further Additions and Alterations to Jochheim's Popular History	124
3. Chapter Conclusions	129

4. Multiple Perspectives: Competing Biographical Memories in Nina Schröder's <i>Die Frauen der Rosenstraße: Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen</i>	126
1.	126
i) The Inclusion of <i>Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen</i>	134
ii) Re-reading <i>Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen</i> in the Context of Generational Trends	141
iii) Eyewitness Biographies	144
iv) The Use of Photographic Images within the text	147
2. Thematic Analysis of Nina Schröder's <i>Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen</i>	152
i) Breaking an Alleged Taboo	152
ii) Rehabilitating Ordinary Germans	156
iii) Redeeming the 'Ordinary Nazi'?	158
iv) Towards Normalization?	161
v) Good Germans and Normalization	162
vi) Negotiating Between Communicative and Cultural Memory	164
vii) Shifting Attitudes Between 1997 – 2003? Alterations and Additions	169
3. Chapter Conclusions	173
 5. From the Original Draft to the Cinema Screen: Memory and Identity in Transition in Margarethe von Trotta's <i>Rosenstraße</i>	 175
1.	175
i) <i>Rosenstraße</i> : A Synopsis	176
ii) <i>Rosenstraße</i> in Context	179
iii) Responses to <i>Rosenstraße</i>	184
iv) Trends in Cinema: <i>Rosenstraße</i> as a German Heritage Film	187
v) Von Trotta's Motivation and Competing Interests	189

vi)	Moving Towards a Critical Remembering? Criticisms, Contradictions and Problematic Interpretations in the original Screenplay, April 1995	192
vii)	Refining the Content and Reducing Critical Potential? Observations on the Additions and Alterations in the December 1995 Screenplay	197
2.	Thematic Analysis of Margarethe von Trotta's <i>Rosenstraße</i>	200
i)	The Function of Transgenerational and Generational Dialogues	203
ii)	The Depiction of Jewish and non-Jewish Suffering in <i>Rosenstraße</i>	206
iii)	Allegorical References to the Holocaust	211
iv)	Multiple Victims in <i>Rosenstraße</i>	213
v)	Christian Iconography in Constructions of Resistance and Opposition	216
vi)	Sexual Sacrifice – Implications of the Goebbels scene	220
vii)	Anti-Semitism, Philo-Semitism and National Identity in <i>Rosenstraße</i>	222
3.	Chapter Conclusions	232
6.	The <i>Rosenstraße</i> as a Monument: A Complex Site of German-Jewish Memory	234
1.		234
i)	Why consider memorialisation?	236
ii)	The Function of Memorials in Collective Memory Construction	240
iii)	Continuities and Trends in Memorialisation: From Divided to Unified Germany	241
iv)	Background to Ingeborg Hunzinger's Memorial Project	245
v)	Ingeborg Hunzinger: Artist and Memorial Entrepreneur	246
vi)	Memorial Struggles and Competing Agendas	248
vii)	Interpreting the Women's Bloc	251
viii)	Solidarity and Unity in the Women's Bloc	256

ix)	Contrasts and Implicit Criticisms	261
x)	Concluding Observations on the Women's Bloc	264
2.	The Memorial Plaque: Explaining Rosenstraße and Guiding Remembrance	265
i)	Background to the Memorial Plaque	266
ii)	Analysis of the Plaque's Form and Content	267
3.	'Advertising' Memorialisation: The Topography of Terror's Permanent On-Site Exhibition in Rosenstraße	270
i)	Background to the Topography of Terror	272
ii)	Exhibition in Context: Background to the Rosenstraße Advertising Columns	273
iii)	Aims and Intentions of the Rosenstraße Exhibition	275
iv)	Realising the Aims Through the Form	276
v)	Exhibition Content Analysis	279
vi)	Concluding Observations on the Rosenstraße Exhibition	285
vii)	Integrating Rosenstraße into the Topography's Main Exhibition	286
4.	Rosenstraße as an Urban Palimpsest	288
5.	Chapter Conclusions	292
7.	Reflections on the Dynamics of German Remembering: Concluding Observations and Future Indications	295
1.	Summary and Interpretation of Findings	295
2.	Indications for the Future Direction of Research into Remembering	301
	Appendices	304
	Bibliography	308

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Rosenstraße Protest in Historiography and Cultural Memory

1.

In autumn 2003 the Rosenstraße protest – an act of opposition by Germans in mixed Judeo-Christian marriages against the arrest and feared deportation of their Jewish spouses and children which took place in Berlin 60 years earlier – came to the fore in public imagination. This interest was ignited by the release of the film *Rosenstraße* and the ensuing debate over the following weeks and months involving historians, filmmakers, journalists and eyewitnesses. Competing interpretations of the events, and the question of their significance with regard to Germany's resistance heritage and constructions of national identity, became a source of much contention. However, although public engagement with the theme at this point may have seemed new, the Rosenstraße protest had in fact already been a feature of German cultural memory for some considerable time. This thesis examines the most prominent cultural representations of the Rosenstraße protest, beginning with the debate between historians, before moving on to consider popular history, biography, film and memorialisation. Unlike previous studies, this thesis brings together for the first time the different strands of memory work on the subject.

Through the use of cultural memory theory, it aims to show why the events have become prominent in German cultural memory in recent years, the protest's place in unified Germany's self-understanding, and the different ways the protest has been remembered and why. This analysis is shown to illustrate the dynamics of Germany's historical memory, namely the push-pull between desire to historicize memories of the Nazi past versus the wish for a historical accountability that both allows for a more differentiated understanding of the period but simultaneously avoids relativising it. At the same time it highlights the fluidity between different media of memory. In this thesis I show how interpretations of the past are politicised but also concomitant with shifting questions of identity in the Berlin Republic.

Whilst cultural representations provide the focus of this thesis, it is important to provide an account of the historical facts, even if this has to be kept brief to accommodate the spatial constraints of this thesis. An overview of the events is therefore offered in this

introduction. This shows, in the period between 1945 and 1990, the Rosenstraße protest has featured, in publications ranging from newspaper and journal articles, to memoirs, biographies and fictional texts. Whilst engagement with the events precedes 1990, it has, undeniably, increased exponentially in the years since, although as this thesis argues, its development is not solely a consequence of unification, but it has also undoubtedly benefited from shifts in deeper patterns of remembering and re-consideration of the Nazi past. Following on from the contextualisation of the events and their representation up to 1990, the introduction then provides an overview of the key developments and positions within historical research up to the present day, before positioning the Rosenstraße protest in debates on resistance and on identity. The latter part of this chapter discusses the theoretical framework and methodology underpinning the study, after which it explains the thesis structure and concludes with an overview of the chapters.

i) Overview of the Events

The protest began at the end of February 1943 in response to the arrest and feared deportation of Jewish Germans married to Christians, and *Mischlinge* (individuals of mixed Christian–Jewish descent) during the ‘Factory Action’ (*Fabrik-Aktion*), a nationwide razzia against Jewish Germans. It concluded approximately one week later. The protest in Rosenstraße forms part of the wider history of intermarriage during the Third Reich. German Jews in mixed Judeo-Christian intermarriages were persecuted as part of the Nazi regime’s Jewish policy. However, to some degree it treated intermarried German Jews and so-called *Mischlinge* differently from those the regime deemed to be ‘full Jews’.¹ Most significantly it supposedly protected them from deportation.² Notably the terms mixed or intermarriage were commonly used prior to Nazi era, but were subsequently appropriated to denote Judeo-Christian marriages specifically in this period, whilst the term *Mischling* is derogatory and is often

¹ The term ‘full Jew’ (*Volljude*) was used by the regime to define an individual of Jewish heritage without any familial Christian links.

² This was no guarantee of survival. Whilst intermarriage offered a degree of protection, some intermarried Jewish Germans were deported. If a mixed marriage came to an end, either through divorce or the death of the non-Jewish spouse, this degree of protection was lost. Forcibly dissolving intermarriages was also proposed but this was never implemented. See Stoltzfus, N., 1996. *Resistance of the Heart. Intermarriage and the Rosenstraße Protest*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

substituted for the term 'partial Jew'.³ These individuals were grouped into two categories, either partial Jews in the first degree, also known as *Geltungsjuden*, who were treated as so-called 'full Jews', or partial Jews in the second degree, who were less immediately subject to the measures the regime imposed. Their categorisation largely depended firstly on their parentage, and secondly on the question of whether they were raised under the Christian or Jewish faith.

The status of intermarriage had implications for the way in which the regime applied its Jewish policy. Although all intermarriages were initially considered equal in status, in 1938 the regime introduced two categories of intermarriage: privileged and non-privileged.⁴ Privileged intermarriages were defined as marriages in which the husband was a non-Jew and his wife a Jewess, or where their children were brought up in the Christian faith. Conversely, a non-privileged intermarriage was defined as one in which the husband was Jewish but the wife was Christian, and their marriage was either childless or the children were raised in accordance with the Jewish faith. The categorisation of Judeo-Christian marriages in this way was undoubtedly politically and socially motivated.⁵ The distinction had significant implications, however, as by and large individuals in non-privileged intermarriages tended to be drawn directly into the regime's Jewish persecution ahead of those in privileged intermarriages. That is not to suggest that privileged intermarriages were shielded from persecution; they too were eventually drawn into the regime's Jewish policy and affected by the 'Factory Action'.

Jewish persecution took many forms, and included forced labour. In 1943 many non-privileged intermarried German Jews were engaged as forced labourers, and assigned to Germany's armaments industry, alongside other so-called 'full Jews', particularly in Berlin. When the regime launched its round-up of the remaining German Jews, it primarily targeted the armaments industry, arresting forced labourers at the factories in which they had been forced to work.⁶ Other intermarried Jewish Germans, from both

³ Note that eyewitness testimonies, even recent ones, tend to retain the old terminology.

⁴ This distinction was introduced following the *Kristallnacht* pogrom against German Jews in November 1938.

⁵ The categorisation of intermarriages in this way is perhaps a reflection of the misogyny inherent in Nazi ideology, suggesting that Germanness is passed down through the male line, and also that Germanness is diametrically opposed to Jewishness as its 'other'.

⁶ The regime focus on the armaments factories provided the name Factory Action by which these mass arrests and deportations have become known.

privileged and non-privileged intermarriages, were also arrested and detained as part of this *razzia*. In Berlin, they were held at numerous sites across the city, and subsequently divided into two groups according to their marital status. Those married to non-Jewish Germans along with so-called partial Jews, were sent to Rosenstraße in the centre of Berlin, with a lesser number sent to nearby Große Hamburger Straße, whilst the vast majority, over 10,000 people, were deported over the course of the week, and a further 4,000 fled into illegality, attempting to live out the regime in hiding.⁷

Approximately 2,000 of the estimated 8,000 intermarried Jewish Germans and partial Jews living in Berlin in early 1943 were arrested and detained in the Factory Action.⁸ Unlike the majority of those arrested, the detainees at Rosenstraße had spouses and extended family, who were able to locate their place of detention – the building that had formally been the Jewish Community Building for the Mitte district – and gather on the street outside, demonstrating solidarity with them, and calling for their release. For the most part, it was women who opposed these detentions, a factor that is unsurprising when we consider that the majority of the detainees were male. Of the detainees in Rosenstraße, twenty-five men were deported to the labour camp at Auschwitz-Monowitz along with twelve of the intermarried detainees at Große Hamburger Straße. However, within two weeks they had been moved to the labour camp at Groß-Beeren on the outskirts of Berlin. The reason for their deportation and subsequent return to Berlin - where they remained until the end of the war - is disputed, as the next section of this introduction explains. The remainder of the Rosenstraße detainees were released, some within a day of their original arrest, with a large majority being released after one week, and a few remaining in detention for up to six weeks, long after the protest had ceased.⁹ The vast majority of the Rosenstraße detainees survived the Third Reich.

⁷ Many Jewish Germans were forewarned in the days and weeks leading up to the Factory Action and fled so as to evade capture. These have become known as *U-Boote* and survived with the help of Jewish resistance networks or individuals who aided their survival.

⁸ Gruner, W., 2002. 'Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Ereignisse in der Berliner Rosenstraße Fakten und Fiktionen um den 27. Februar 1943'. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 11, pp.137-177, here p.161.

⁹ Whilst a few detainees were released within twenty-four hours of their arrest, others were not arrested until several days later whilst the protest was already established. A minority also remained in Rosenstraße longer owing to the regime's desire to check their status and confirm their intermarriages. This seemingly applied where the process of divorce was already underway or the couple lived apart. The most notable example is publisher Heinz Ullstein who remained in Rosenstraße for a number of weeks, but was released when his wife, from whom he was estranged at the time, halted divorce proceedings. He dedicated a chapter of his memoirs to her for this. See his 1961 autobiography: *Spielplatz meines Lebens. Erinnerung*. Munich: Kindler.

For decades the reason for their arrest remained seemingly undisputed. It had been assumed that the regime had intended to deport the Rosenstraße detainees but was prevented from doing so by the protest; that it had acquiesced in order to avoid public unrest at a significant stage in the war following defeat on the Eastern Front at Stalingrad and the intensification of the aerial war over German cities, and over Berlin in particular. However, since the mid-1990s this interpretation has been called into question, becoming a matter of bitter and at times intense dispute.

ii) **Representations of the Rosenstraße Protest 1945-1990**

As this section highlights, a diverse array of representations across different media have appeared sporadically since 1945, and with increasing frequency in more recent years. The first known account appeared in December 1945 in an article entitled „*Aufstand der Frauen*” by journalist Georg Zivier, in the second edition of *Sie: Eine Zeitschrift für Frauen- und Menschenrechte*, a women’s newsmagazine jointly edited by Ruth Andreas-Friedrich, Helmut Kindler and Heinz Ullstein. It was subsequently re-published on 14th January 1946 in *Die Neue Zeitung*, an American military-owned German language newspaper. In the years after 1945 narrative accounts of the protest can be found in newspaper articles, academic publications, memoirs, biographies, popular history, and fiction.¹⁰ There are a number of factors, however, that distinguish these representations from those examined in this thesis, the first and most significant being their relative brevity: they address the protest only briefly as part of a broader, overarching narrative, with depictions ranging in length from several paragraphs to several pages, or a chapter at most. However, I do not wish to suggest that the protest was in any way previously suppressed, rather I argue that the idea that the Rosenstraße protest has been, or continues to be a repressed history is unfounded. Whilst there can be no doubt that it was not previously foregrounded either in Holocaust memory, or in discourses of resistance, it would be inaccurate to suggest that the events were intentionally marginalized or repressed in East or West Germany, or indeed more recently in the Berlin Republic.¹¹

¹⁰ For a full list of representations from 1945-1990 in which the Rosenstraße protest features, see the bibliography.

¹¹ In his study of memories of Nazi Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust in GDR memory, Bill Niven similarly challenges prevailing notions that such memories were marginalized, showing how memories of the Holocaust were present in the GDR, and indeed that there existed a plurality of memory. See his

What I demonstrate, however, is that in the last two decades interest in the Rosenstraße protest has burgeoned. Therefore my thesis asks how to account for it. If one considers the number of representations that post-date 1990 one might reasonably assume that this interest can be attributed to the political and social upheaval of unification. The return to centrality of the Nazi past in public discourse that followed the end of division arguably provided an environment in which cultural memories of the protest could flourish. Yet, close examination reveals that its emergence pre-dates 1990. The Rosenstraße protest first became a subject of more intense interest in the 1980s, both in the Federal Republic and in the GDR, and this trend merely continued following unification. Reference to the events already appears in Holocaust as well as resistance historiographies, memoirs, biographies, and a thirty-minute television documentary in the 1980s. Popular historian Gernot Jochheim and American historian Nathan Stoltzfus began their research into the events during the 1980s, with Nathan Stoltzfus publishing an extensive article in the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* in July 1989, whilst Gernot Jochheim's book *Protest in der Rosenstraße* was published in 1990, shortly before unification.¹² Towards the end of the 1980s interest also extended to focus on memorialisation. The then East Berlin Jewish Community acknowledged the protest as part of their annual commemoration ceremony; this has continued in the years since unification.¹³ The late 1980s was also when Ingeborg Hunzinger developed plans for her memorial sculpture, which was eventually installed in 1995.¹⁴

Whilst the 1980s witnessed increased interest in the protest, from the 1990s onwards we can see a further development in the number of representations of the protest in historiography, popular history and biography, documentaries, film, and memorialisation. These include monographs by Nathan Stoltzfus and Wolf Gruner respectively, and a volume edited by Antonia Leugers, along with academic articles on

'Remembering Nazi Anti-Semitism in the GDR'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp.205-213.

¹² Stoltzfus, N., 1989. 'Jemand war für mich da. Der Aufstand der Frauen in der Rosenstraße'. *Die Zeit* 30, 20 – 21 July, pp.9-12. Timed to coincide with the anniversary of the 20th July plot, this article served as an appeal for witnesses to help further Stoltzfus' research, whilst it also generated public interest. The creators of the 1992 and 1993 temporary exhibitions in Rosenstraße cite Stoltzfus' article as a trigger for their commemorative project, as will be shown in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

¹³ Members of the West Berlin Jewish Community were also invited to, and attended this ceremony, which features in Roza Berger-Fiedler's documentary. The exhibition on Jewish life in Berlin, housed in the Neue Synagoge in Oranienburgerstraße, also makes a passing reference to the protest.

¹⁴ I discuss Ingeborg Hunzinger's work and the political controversy around its installation in Chapter 6.

the history of the protest, Gernot Jochheim's popular history account, published in three different versions over a twelve year period, Nina Schröder's twice published biography, TV documentaries, Margarethe von Trotta's 2003 film *Rosenstraße*, and an array of different memorials, both temporary and permanent.¹⁵ In addition, the protest has also found attention in the press – albeit fluctuating – in responses to the anniversary of the Factory Action, memorial installations, book publications, developments in historical research, and the film, as well as Holocaust commemoration and initiatives against contemporary right-wing violence. Press interest increased around the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries in 1993 and 2003.¹⁶

Given the interest in the protest, however, there has been surprisingly little scholarly work on the reflection of the events in cultural memory. Thus far interest has focused either on historical interpretation, or filmic representation. Little research has been devoted to attempts to reflect upon the spectrum of cultural representations of the protest, how they impact upon one another and how they intersect with broader public discourses on resistance, and on identity. This study attempts to address this gap. Its primary focus is post-1990 for the reasons outlined above.

iii) An Overview of Existing Research

Research into the Rosenstraße protest has developed considerably in recent years, providing new insights into the events, but also leaving opinion divided over the issues of the regime's intention towards the Rosenstraße detainees and the protest's success. Two main interpretations have emerged. The first proposes that the spontaneous gathering of intermarried Germans on Rosenstraße was an act of successful resistance to the Nazi regime, without which the detainees would have been deported, irrespective of the law, which supposedly exempted them from deportation. The regime was forced to concede, however, releasing those in Rosenstraße out of fear of the long-term impact

¹⁵ Although the original intention had been to include the television documentaries in this study, it was not possible to source them, with the exception of Róza Berger-Fiedler's 1988 documentary, which can be viewed at the Babelsberg archive.

¹⁶ Prior to unification the press showed little interest in the protest. Since 1991, however it has featured repeatedly, with a variety of articles appearing across the local as well as national press over the years up until 2008. Where possible analysis of these articles has been incorporated into the relevant chapters of this thesis. For a statistical breakdown of newspaper interest by year and specific subject see appendices 1 and 1.2.

of public opposition.¹⁷ Conversely, the second proposes that the protest did not bring about the Rosenstraße detainees' release, as the regime intended to release and re-distribute intermarried German Jews in enforced labour, following the Factory Action, albeit temporarily.¹⁸ In what follows I turn my attention to the research that supports the first interpretation, and then shift my focus to consider the research that underpins the second.

American historian Nathan Stoltzfus is the strongest advocate of the first interpretation, having written a substantial body of work on the protest.¹⁹ Stoltzfus analyses the protest in the context of intermarriage during the Third Reich, and makes the case that intermarried Germans defied the regime from its very outset, setting an early precedent, and that this was instrumental in their later success in 1943.²⁰ He explains how intermarried Germans found ways to circumvent the regime's anti-Semitic policies as much as possible, and that many demonstrated their defiance by remaining married, in spite of ever-increasing hardship and pressure to divorce. Following the same interpretation as Daniel J. Goldhagen, that social isolation was a pre-requisite for the Holocaust,²¹ Stoltzfus concludes that because of their familial loyalty, intermarried Germans were able to provide a degree of protection from the regime. He argues that the regime feared the protest could both cause widespread dissent and bring the realities of the Holocaust to the fore, hence they conceded to the protesters' demands, and released the detainees, in order to bring the protest to a swift conclusion.²² However, Stoltzfus also suggests that after the war the Rosenstraße protest was suppressed in accounts of German history, because it revealed that the regime could be defeated, and by implication that the

¹⁷ This interpretation has been adopted by Nathan Stoltzfus, Antonia Leugers, Jana Leichsenring, Joachim Neander, Pascal Prause and Eric A. Johnson.

¹⁸ This opposing interpretation is advocated by Wolf Gruner with the support of historians Wolfgang Benz, Rainer Decker, Christoph Dipper, Richard J. Evans, Saul Friedländer, Monika Kingreen, Peter Longerich, Beate Meyer, Claudia Schoppmann and Diane Schulle. Peter Longerich for example, cites Wolf Gruner's 2005 monograph as the corrective to Nathan Stoltzfus' 1996 monograph *Resistance of the Heart. Intermarriage and the Rosenstraße Protest*. See Longerich, P., 2010. *Holocaust. The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. p.562.

¹⁹ A full list of his works can be found in the bibliography.

²⁰ He highlights the example of protest by intermarried Germans, as well as other members of their families, against the arrest and detention of intermarried German Jews following *Kristallnacht* in 1938.

²¹ Goldhagen, D., 1996. *Hitler's Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. London: Little, Brown.

²² Stoltzfus is supported in this interpretation by historian Eric A. Johnson, who places a similar significance on the protest and its ability to restrain the regime. See: Johnson, E.A., 2000. *Nazi Terror: Gestapo, Jews and Ordinary Germans*. New York: Basic Books, pp.424-428. Johnson largely draws on Stoltzfus and Gernot Jochheim's works on the protest.

Holocaust could have been either prevented or halted. This, he suggests, did not fit with either West Germany's or later unified Germany's collective memories and that consequently the protest has been ignored.

A number of other aspects have also been considered in research including the position of the Catholic Church, the impact of the *Stille Helden* (Silent Heroes) on Jewish survival, the extent of opposition during the Factory Action, as well as the correlation between Jewish persecution and the war economy. Antonia Leugers' research examines intermarriage and the protest in Rosenstraße from the perspective of the Catholic Church. She highlights the ways in which certain members (including Bishop Bertram, Gertrud Luckner and Dr Sommer Margarethe) attempted to intervene on behalf Jewish Germans, albeit largely Catholics of Jewish descent.²³ Leugers argues that Bertram interceded in discussions on the forced dissolution of mixed marriages, a policy which, had it become law, would have removed the protection the state afforded Jews married to non-Jewish Germans.²⁴ Gertrud Luckner, by contrast travelled across Germany forewarning intermarried Catholics of Jewish descent of the impending razzia.²⁵ Lastly Dr Sommer, director of the *Hilfswerk beim Bischöflichen Ordinariat Berlin* or *HBOB*,²⁶ advocated unified opposition to the Holocaust from the leaders of the Catholic Church in Germany and the Papacy. Although Sommer succeeded in persuading Bishop Wienken's office to intervene in Berlin during the Factory Action, her attempts to muster further opposition were largely unsuccessful.

Whilst Leugers' research indicates the extent to which interested groups were involved in the events, she maintains that the protest nevertheless remains the main reason for the release of the Rosenstraße detainees. This conclusion is drawn on the basis of a report written by Margarethe Sommer in 1943. The report outlines the national picture,

²³ The term is used to describe baptised Catholics who had either converted to Catholicism, or who had been raised in the Catholic faith but who, on the basis of Nazi racial laws were deemed to be Jewish on account of their family heritage.

²⁴ Bertram's opposition to the proposed dissolution was not the result of a particular sense of Judeo-Christian solidarity; rather it was a matter theology, of upholding the sanctity of marriage.

²⁵ Gertrud Luckner was engaged in benevolent work with Catholics of Jewish descent. She was arrested on 24th March 1943 and deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp where she was freed in 1945.

²⁶ The HBOB or Benevolence Organisation of the Bishopric of Berlin (my translation) was originally established in 1938 to facilitate emigration. Although part of the Catholic Church it was open to all religious denominations. For Protestants however, their mixed marriage had to be with a Catholic of Jewish descent in order to qualify for the organisation's help. On this see Leichsenring, J., 2005. 'Wurde der Protest in der Rosenstraße Ende Februar/Anfang März 1943 organisiert?' In: A. Leugers, ed. 2005. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur*. pp.81-114, here pp.84-87.

highlighting the fact that where intermarried Jewish Germans were arrested the detainees were subsequently released if their spouses protested publicly; it suggests this was the case for Osnabrück, as well as Innsbruck and cities in the South Tyrol. Conversely in cities where there was no public opposition, such as Frankfurt am Main, intermarried German Jews were deported.²⁷

In addition, Leugers suggests that the protest in Rosenstraße has been insufficiently recognised, and that single-issue opposition (i.e. acts directed against a specific policy or event), should be recognised as resistance in much the same way as more general acts of opposition to the state have been.²⁸ Pascal Prause has also argued in favour of a re-assessment of opposition in Berlin during the Factory Action. He examines multiple sites of protest, highlighting the fact that, although Rosenstraße was the largest and most enduring, it was not the only one. Smaller, shorter protests also took place in nearby Große Hamburger Straße, at Ballhaus „Clou“, and at the former Jewish school in Auguststraße. Public protest, he suggests, was also far more extensive than has been documented.²⁹ In addition, Prause challenges the view that privileged intermarried couples were largely unaffected by the Factory Action, suggesting instead that both privileged and non-privileged intermarried German Jews, and young children, were arrested during the Factory Action. He argues that a reassessment of both the protest and who was affected by it is needed.³⁰

In addition to Leugers' Jana Leichsenring's research also considers the events from the perspective of the aforementioned Dr Margarethe Sommer. She asks how the protest first developed, and whether, despite appearing to be spontaneous, it was in fact organised. Leichsenring proposes that Margarethe Sommer, as director of the *Hilfswerk beim Bischöflichen Ordinariat Berlin*, was not only well informed in advance of any regime action, and had knowledge of who was affected, but that she was also in possession of the relevant data to contact them, which placed her in a unique position.

²⁷ The Catholic Church directly intervened over the detentions in Innsbruck and the South Tyrol.

²⁸ Leugers' suggestion parallels Stoltzfus's 1995 plea, which was strongly rebuked by historian Christoph Dipper, and presupposes that the protest is not already considered resistance. This debate will be covered in greater detail in the following chapter.

²⁹ In the early 1990s the protest at Große Hamburger Straße was recognised. Gernot Jochheim refers to it in his popular history examined in Chapter 3.

³⁰ Prause, P., 2005. 'Juden in „Mischehen“ und „jüdische Mischlinge“ als Opfer der „Fabrik-Aktion“ – zur Notwendigkeit einer Re-Interpretation der Ereignisgeschichte'. In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur*, pp.19-46, here. pp.36-40 and pp.40-45.

According to Leichsenring, she was able to contact the detainees' relatives, and organise a protest, or at least a gathering of relatives, that would however appear spontaneous. Leichsenring suggests Sommer organised the protest out of frustration at the Church's failure to oppose the regime's Jewish policy, coupled with the fact that a number of her own staff had been deported. She argues that Sommer, aided by her remaining staff, informed the detainees' relatives of their place of detention and encouraged the families to go to Rosenstraße and protest.³¹

Researchers have also begun to question the alleged wider impact of the protest. Joachim Neander examines the protest from several angles. His research focuses firstly on the deportation of a group of detainees from Rosenstraße and the detention centre on Große Hamburger Straße to Auschwitz-Monowitz, and from there to the labour camp Groß-Beeren outside Berlin. He draws the conclusion that the protest not only aided the deportees on a psychological level, but also affected their official status. He suggests they were deported as *Schutzhäftlinge*, or protected prisoners, designating them for forced labour.³² Secondly, Neander suggests that the regime was prepared to compromise its ideological ideals in favour of pragmatism. Neander compares the situation in Berlin with instances of public opposition in occupied France, the Netherlands as well as other German cities, which seemingly also resulted in the regime opting not to pursue its ideological aims so as to avoid public unrest. He concludes that it is therefore plausible the regime also conceded over Rosenstraße.³³ Thirdly, Neander highlights the correlation between the regime's Jewish policy and their war economy. Neander makes the case that intermarried German Jews were deported in order to make up the labour shortfall at Auschwitz,³⁴ but also as part of an experiment to gauge the public response to their deportation. Neander thus concludes intermarried German Jews would have been deported in far greater numbers had there been no protest in Berlin.³⁵

³¹ Leichsenring, J., 2005. 'Wurde der Protest in der Rosenstraße Ende Februar/Anfang März 1943 organisiert?' In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur*, pp.81-114.

³² Neander, J., 'Die Auschwitz-Rückkehrer vom 21. März 1943'. In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur*, pp.115-144.

³³ Neander, J., 2005. 'Die Rosenstraße von außen gesehen – Wechsel der Perspektiven' In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur*, pp.163-202, here pp. 173-175 and 178-179.

³⁴ The regime transferred its Polish prisoners from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, following fears the German army's defeat on the Eastern Front could prove a catalyst for an uprising in the camp.

³⁵ This position is supported by historian Felix Moeller, Margarethe von Trotta's son, who also played a small role, as Goebbels' adjutant, in the film *Rosenstraße*. See his: 'Der Protest in der Rosenstraße. Eine Woche im Berlin des Jahres 1943'. In: Wydra, T., ed. 2003. *Rosenstraße. Ein Film von Margarethe von Trotta. Die Geschichte. Die Hintergründe, Die Regisseurin*. Berlin: Nicolai, 2003, pp.25-60, here p.47.

Although the interpretation of the protest as a successful act of resistance has been, and continues to be well supported, it has also been challenged. The idea that the protest did not result in the detainees' release was first proposed in the mid-1990s and has gained considerable support since then. In 1996, historian Wolf Gruner put forward the interpretation that the detention of intermarried Jewish Germans served a different purpose and that consequently the protest did not force their release. On the basis of his analysis of the events in relation to the Jewish forced labour programme, Gruner argues that intermarried German Jews were to be removed from the armaments industry, but that they were to continue as forced labourers, albeit in a different capacity; detaining them at Rosenstraße served to facilitate the process of re-allocating forced labourers.³⁶ This position is similarly supported by Monika Kingreen, whose study of the Frankfurt am Main area also suggests the reallocation of forced labour is the most probable cause of the arrest and the subsequent release of intermarried German Jews.³⁷

Gruner argues the regime had no immediate intention to deport them at that stage, a factor neither the detainees nor the protesters could have been aware of, but that the regime did intend to deport them at a later stage.³⁸ To add further support to this hypothesis, he contends that of the approximately 8,000 intermarried German Jews who lived in Berlin in early 1943, approximately one quarter were detained. Had the regime intended to deport them at this point, rather than use them as forced labourers, Gruner suggests, it would have detained a far greater number. Moreover, he argues that the pattern of the arrests and release varied, a point Beate Meyer explores in more detail, as discussed below.³⁹ Similarly, the deportation of the twenty-five men from Rosenstraße, and the twelve from Große Hamburger Straße, differed from the treatment of the

³⁶ The regime deported the majority of the staff and intended to replace them with a smaller workforce constituted of intermarried German Jews and so-called partial Jews so that the remaining Jewish institutions could continue whilst that suited the regime's purposes. Once the places had been allocated, the remaining individuals were to be placed in other forms of forced labour. For a full list of Wolf Gruner's works see the bibliography.

³⁷ Kosmala, B., 2004. Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943 – Zeitzeugen und Historiker zwischen Akten und Erinnerung. Available from: <http://www.tu-berlin.de/presse/pi/2004/pi104.htm> [Accessed 4th September 2006].

Leichsenring, J., 2004. Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943 Tagungsberichte. Available from: <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=501> [Accessed 16th December 2005].

³⁸ Gruner suggests the regime began to deport intermarried German Jews to Theresienstadt at the beginning of 1945, but was prevented by the course of the war from continuing with its plans.

³⁹ Gruner, W., 2005. *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße, 2005, Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Verfolgung der Mischehen 1943*. Frankfurt. a. M: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, pp.102-129.

majority. He argues that these men were deported as a punishment for the protest; however, they were deported as *Schutzhäftlinge* and returned, albeit not released, because of their protected status, rather than as a result of the spouses' protest.⁴⁰

Gruner's research also explores the origins of the claim the protesters defeated the regime, suggesting it originates in Georg Zivier's newspaper article, rather than any empirical evidence.⁴¹ Although it was an act of resistance, Gruner suggests the protest involved far fewer people, and was far less provocative than it has been considered to be. Whilst the protest should be recognised, he suggests it should be with the caveat that this protest was an exception, and that during the Factory Action alone, many thousands more were deported without any protest whatsoever.⁴² Nevertheless, as Gruner outlines, German-Jewish solidarity, although limited, did exist. He shows that during the Factory Action alone, industrialists, police, even members of the SS, as well as many ordinary Germans opposed the regime's measures by forewarning individuals of their impending arrest as well as aiding flight and survival in illegality. Thus intermarried Germans belonged to a wider circle of opponents. Claudia Schoppmann supports this position, stating that Judeo-Christian families were often the first port of call for German Jews fleeing persecution.⁴³ Moreover, solidarity extended beyond the period of the Factory Action, and into the months and years that followed, during which the persecution of intermarried German Jews and so-called partial Jews heightened.⁴⁴ It

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.166-172. Although he concedes that there were deportations from other areas such as Darmstadt, he argues that this was in all probability the result of local initiative, which was subsequently halted by Berlin (pp.172-177).

⁴¹ Ibid., pp.18-30. He also argues that this was a collaborative piece between Zivier, journalist Ruth Andreas-Friedrich and publicist Heinz Ullstein, arguing that the parallels between Zivier's article and Andreas-Friedrich's later diary publications are so close they could not have been written independently. Gruner argues that subsequent publications were based on Zivier's article, perpetuating its interpretation without questioning it.

⁴² Gruner, W., 2005. 'Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Ereignisse in der Berliner Rosenstraße Fakten und Fiktionen um den 27. Februar 1943'. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 11, pp.137-177.

⁴³ Schoppmann, C., 2002. 'Rettung von Juden: ein kaum beachteter Widerstand von Frauen'. In: B. Kosmala and C. Schoppmann, eds. *Überleben im Untergrund: Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland 1941-1945*. Berlin: Metropol, pp.109-126. Gruner demonstrates how some became involved in clandestine groups such as the Berlin Jewish resistance group Chug Chaluzi, as previously thematised for example, in Gernot Jochheim's fictional account *Hans Grossmanns Geschichte*. See: Gruner, 2002. 'Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Ereignisse in der Berliner Rosenstraße', pp.137-177.

⁴⁴ This ranged from attempts to force the dissolution of intermarriages, an increase in forced labour measures, and the deportation of individuals whose intermarriage was no longer in existence. In autumn 1944, the regime carried out a second, smaller 'Factory Action' removing intermarried German Jews from any skilled roles. By January 1945, the regime had begun the process of deporting intermarried German and so called partial Jews to Theresienstadt. Gruner, *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße*, pp.180-189.

is within this context that Gruner indicates the protest and its significance should be considered.

Beate Meyer supports Gruner's hypotheses, but adds a gendered dimension to the argument. She questions the protest's success, but also the assumption that intermarried German women proved more steadfast and loyal than men. Meyer argues that it was clear from the outset that intermarried German Jews were to be treated differently during the Factory Action.⁴⁵ Not only were they detained separately, but the length of their detention also varied considerably.⁴⁶ Meyer suggests that the release of the detainees followed a preordained pattern, and so-called *Klärungsfälle*, whose status was unclear, were detained the longest and only released once their status had been checked. Had the regime simply intended to deport the Rosenstraße detainees, the process of checking their status, Meyer argues, would have been superfluous.⁴⁷ Moreover, their release did not result in a lessening, rather an increase in the levels of persecution.⁴⁸

In addition, Meyer questions the perception that German women, rather than German men, proved the most steadfast spouses in intermarriages.⁴⁹ Meyer investigates the issue of divorce and questions whether the gender of the non-Jewish spouse had any impact on the likelihood the marriage would endure. She shows that statistically, intermarried women were more likely to divorce their Jewish husbands than intermarried men their Jewish wives.⁵⁰ Moreover, divorce rates peaked in the years

⁴⁵ Meyer analysed the testimony given for the 1963 GDR Globke trial. See: Meyer, B., 2002. 'Die Inhaftierung der „jüdisch Versippten“ in der Berliner Rosenstraße im Spiegel staatsanwaltlicher Zeugenvernehmungen in der DDR'. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 11, pp.178-197.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp.185-7.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp.188-9.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.195. Although many fled into illegality, many so-called partial Jews in the first degree, along with the non-Jewish partners, were drawn into the forced labour programme *Organisation Todt* in October 1944. Furthermore, release documents from Rosenstraße did nothing to help the former detainees following the cessation of hostilities if they found themselves in the Soviet occupied zone. Soviet forces had been led to believe no Jewish survivors would be found, but that Nazis attempting to flee would disguise themselves as Jewish victims.

⁴⁹ Nathan Stoltzfus for example, argues that men were more likely to divorce their Jewish wives than non-Jewish wives their Jewish husbands. See his: *Resistance of the Heart. Intermarriage and the Rosenstraße Protest*.

⁵⁰ Meyer suggests approximately 20-25% of intermarried German women filed for divorce. See Meyer, B., 2002. 'The Mixed Marriage. A Guarantee of Survival or a Reflection of German Society during the Nazi regime?' In: D. Bankier, ed. *Probing the Depths of German Anti-Semitism German Society and the Persecution of the Jews, 1933-1941*. New York and Jerusalem: Berghahn Books, pp.54-77. Meyer, B., 2004. 'Geschichte im Film: Judenverfolgung, Mischehen und der Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943'. *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52, pp.23-36, here p.27. To an extent, Meyer suggests that fewer

1938 and 1943, both years that marked a significant intensification in the regime's Jewish policy. Almost one third of these divorces were filed at a time when it was apparent that the Jewish spouse would be deported as a consequence. Yet, intermarried women are nevertheless remembered as the loyal partners, who bravely defied the regime, in spite of statistical evidence to the contrary.

Since the mid-2000s publications specifically dedicated to the Rosenstraße protest have declined, and where historians have acknowledged the protest, their interpretation has tended to be more dismissive.⁵¹ Richard J Evans and Saul Friedländer both strongly refute the success as well as the significance of the protest. Evans downgrades the protest, claiming “subsequent legend elevated this incident into a rare public protest that had secured the internees’ release; but there had never been any intention of sending these particular Jews east for extermination, and the crowd had not engaged in any kind of explicit protest.”⁵² Interestingly, Evans’ position underwent a marked shift, since before he had praised the protest.⁵³ Similarly, Friedländer argues that although the protest “demanded a measure of courage”, it has nevertheless been over-exaggerated, and designates it “an uplifting legend, yet a legend nonetheless.”⁵⁴ Whilst it seems it is only Evans’ view that has shifted, the very diversity of historical research now, suggests that there is a greater readiness to question assumptions about the protest and its significance in the Berlin Republic.

iv) Resistance Debates and the Rosenstraße Protest

A key feature of this thesis is to identify how, when and why the Rosenstraße narrative has become part of existing debates over resistance. To do so also necessitates an understanding of the role resistance has played in public consciousness in the decades

men divorced their spouses because the full extent of Nazi persecution only began to affect so-called privileged intermarriages in 1944, here p.28.

⁵¹ In 2009 Beate Meyer and Hermann Simon’s edited volume from 2000 that accompanied their exhibition *Juden in Berlin 1938-1945*. Berlin: Philo, was translated and re-published in English: Meyer, B., Simon, H., and Schütz, C., eds. 2009. *Jews in Nazi Berlin: From Kristallnacht to Liberation*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. The work contains an essay by Diana Schulle, supporting Wolf Gruner’s hypothesis, but did not prompt renewed discussion.

⁵² Evans, R. J., 2009. *The Third Reich At War*. New York: Penguin, p. 271.

⁵³ In a review of Nathan Stoltzfus’ monograph Richard Evans endorsed the interpretation of the protest as a success and praised Stoltzfus work. See: Evans, R.J., 1996. ‘Wives Against the Nazis’. *Sunday Telegraph*, 17 November, p.20.

⁵⁴ Friedländer, S., 2008. *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945*. New York: Harper Collins, p. 425.

since the demise of the Third Reich. Whilst it is beyond the remit of this study to provide a full and detailed summary of resistance to Nazism, it is necessary to locate the Rosenstraße narrative within the broader shifting trends since 1945 as a way of understanding not only the subject's emergence, but also the politicised nature of this remembering.⁵⁵

Acts of resistance to Hitler provided, according to Hans Mommsen and Klaus-Jürgen Müller, evidence of the existence of an 'other Germany',⁵⁶ that was distinct from the Nazi regime and that existed in parallel to it, and could subsequently be used to counter the 'collective guilt' thesis of the Allies.⁵⁷ Moreover, it also subsequently provided a sense of legitimacy to each of the post-war states. Invoking resistance traditions enabled each of the two Germanies to construct their own foundational myths, albeit in opposition to that of their neighbour, and focus on different aspects of German resistance in line with their respective geo-political positioning. Both states tended to prioritise their chosen acts of resistance namely the Stauffenberg Plot and to a lesser extent civilian resistance in the Federal Republic, and Communist resistance in the GDR. As Bill Niven has shown, each state emphasised the achievements and relative strengths of their chosen resistance narratives, without identifying its weaknesses and failings, casting doubt on the other's resistance tradition, de-legitimising it in order to bolster their own, and claiming to have had the better resistance, thus making them the better Germany.⁵⁸ These narratives facilitated not only the invention of a tradition, as Anne Fuchs suggests, but also helped to create moral legacies for each of the states.⁵⁹

Over time, however, this gave way to a broader understanding. From the 1960s onwards, each state began to take a more critical stance towards their own resistance

⁵⁵ For detailed works on German resistance see for example: Geyer, M., and Boyer, J.W., 1994. *Resistance Against the Third Reich 1933 – 1990*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press; Überschar, G.R., 2006. *Für ein anderes Deutschland. Der deutsche Widerstand gegen den NS-Staat 1933 – 1945*. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag. Further works are listed in the bibliography.

⁵⁶ The term the 'other Germany' has its origins in the wartime diaries of Ulrich von Hassell, discovered after his execution following the 20th July Plot, becoming synonymous with German resistance, particularly in the FRG.

⁵⁷ Müller, K-J., and Mommsen, H., 1986. 'Der deutsche Widerstand gegen das NS-Regime. Zur Historiographie des Widerstandes'. In: K-J. Müller, ed. *Der deutsche Widerstand 1939-1945*. Paderborn: Schöningh, p.13.

⁵⁸ Niven, B., 2002. *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich*. London and New York: Routledge, pp.63-72.

⁵⁹ Fuchs, A., 2008. *Phantoms of War in Contemporary German Literature, Films and Discourse. The Politics of Memory*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, p.115.

traditions, whilst also considering other acts, which included recognising aspects of the other state's tradition, and incorporating them into their own.⁶⁰ This broadening of the resistance tradition was also accompanied by a shift in approach in the 1970s, through projects such as the Munich Institute for Contemporary History's *Alltagsgeschichte: Bayern in der NS Zeit*,⁶¹ which moved away from a fundamentalist approach to reading resistance, that had focused on organised, high-risk political action against the regime as a whole, to a focus instead on a societal approach, which concentrated on the diversity of the forms of conflict with the regime on the part of ordinary citizens. This shift from questioning 'motives' for resistance to an examination of 'effect' or 'function' facilitated a debate on the definition of resistance, on what could and could not be included.⁶² This was subsequently accompanied by a political commitment to examining the breadth and diversity of German resistance to Nazism, acknowledged in the speech of the then West Berlin mayor, Richard von Weizsäcker, on 8th May 1985 endorsing the need "to honour the memory of all those Germans who had sacrificed their lives resisting Hitler".⁶³ This commitment was realised through the development of the Memorial Site for German Resistance (*Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand*) and its acknowledged aim of integrating previously excluded groups alongside the 20th July Conspirators.

It was this shift in approach to resistance, and the commitment to creating a more inclusive picture, coupled with trends in national identity discourses to be discussed shortly, I want to suggest, that first facilitated an engagement with the Rosenstraße protest. It has grown and developed over time, but has been accelerated as a result of on-going shifts in the resistance debate that followed unification. I therefore take the position that unification did not constitute a watershed with regard to Rosenstraße, but was rather a stage in the process of reconciling the protest with Germany's resistance heritage. As I have indicated, in the 1980s, the subject had already begun to emerge. Research into resistance in Berlin had yielded interest, albeit only briefly, in

⁶⁰ This remained politicised, however. Whilst the GDR recognised the 20th July Plot, it only acknowledged certain key figures such as Stauffenberg, whilst excluding others such as Beck and Goerdeler, who had taken an anti-Soviet stance and could not therefore be reconciled with the GDR's historical picture.

⁶¹ The project was initially led by Peter Hüttenberger and subsequently led by Martin Broszat.

⁶² Kershaw, I., 2000. *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. London: Arnold, pp.190-203.

⁶³ Mommsen, H., 2009. *Germans Against Hitler. The Stauffenberg Plot and Resistance under the Third Reich* translated and annotated by Angus McGeogh. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, p.254.

Rosenstraße, with Heiko Roskamp's 1984 publication *Tiergarten 1933-1945: Verfolgung und Widerstand in einem Berliner Innenstadtbezirk* and later Wolfgang Benz's study *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933-1945*.⁶⁴ This is in addition to the aforementioned references in memoirs, biographies, and novels, as well as research by Jochheim and Stoltzfus and memorialisation in the GDR.⁶⁵ Hence, by the end of the decade, the Rosenstraße protest had already begun to gain recognition. The reconsideration of the resistance traditions in the wake of the collapse of the GDR, however, further facilitated the integration of the narrative. The shifts in resistance trends that followed unification rendered existing approaches to reading Rosenstraße contentious on the one hand, a factor that continues to underpin the nature of the dispute that has followed, but on the other hand also further broadened the resistance spectrum, adding a greater emphasis to the resistance of ordinary Germans that contributes to an understanding of the regime's power and of the possibilities for opposition to it. The protest in Rosenstraße, whether successful or not, above all serves as a reminder that opposition and dissent were possible.

As Bill Niven explains, unification brought about the need to reconcile the different resistance traditions in one common, shared past.⁶⁶ This not only ensured that resistance remained a prominent theme in public consciousness in the early years of unified Germany, but also that it remained a highly politicised and contentious battleground. This resulted in a bitter and divisive debate that was largely played out in the German media, peaking in 1994, in the year of the 50th anniversary of the 20th July Plot.⁶⁷ Whilst the resistance debate served to highlight the incomplete nature, elisions and contradictions of both the FRG and the GDR's resistance traditions, it did ultimately result in a new consensus on how to approach resistance. This sought to prioritise the commonalities between different types of resistance, rather than focusing on motives,

⁶⁴ Roskamp, H., 1984. *Tiergarten 1933-1945: Verfolgung und Widerstand in einem Berliner Innenstadtbezirk*. Berlin: Werner J Schneider; Benz, W., ed., 1988. *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933-1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft*. Munich: Verlag C.H.Beck.

⁶⁵ Knobloch, H., 1985. *Meine liebste Mathilde. Geschichten zum Berühren*. Berlin, GDR: Buchverlag Der Morgen; Kroh, F., 1988. *David kämpft. Vom jüdischen Widerstand gegen Hitler*. Reineck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag; Laqueur, W., 1980. *Jahre auf Abruf*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

⁶⁶ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, pp.78-83.

⁶⁷ A detailed account of the resistance debate can be found in chapter three of Bill Niven's *Facing the Nazi Past*, pp. 62-94.

impact and claims to have been the ‘better’ or more effective resistance, tendencies that had been thoroughly discredited during the debate.⁶⁸

This new consensus was by no means universally accepted. What did seem apparent, however, was that there was very little desire for continuation of, or indeed even a new resistance debate. Yet, in 1995, when Nathan Stoltzfus published his hypotheses in the academic journal *Geschichte & Gesellschaft*, his approach mirrored the model so recently rejected in favour of the new consensus, in which he called not only for a new debate on the definition of resistance but also argued that the Rosenstraße protest was a better act of resistance than the 20th July Plot and ought to be recognised accordingly.⁶⁹ Unsurprisingly, in an article by historian Christof Dipper, Stoltzfus’ approach – although not his assessment of the protest’s success – was strongly refuted.⁷⁰ Yet, this should not be taken as evidence of any unwillingness to discuss the protest. As Chapter 2 shows, the commitment to inclusivity meant that it had become more possible to engage with the Rosenstraße protest than at any previous time, but also that the approach to its interpretation needed to be scrutinised.

It is no coincidence that interest in the Rosenstraße protest also developed at the same time as public interest turned towards the actions of ordinary Germans, particularly following the media generated interest in Steven Spielberg’s 1994 film *Schindler’s List*, or that it has become possible, in this period, to challenge the hegemonic interpretation of it as a successful protest. The attention generated as a response to Spielberg’s film underscored the willingness not only to debate the Nazi past, but also to reconsider resistance from a more questioning perspective, which suggested resistance could theoretically have been staged by anyone.⁷¹ In the last two decades notions of what constituted German resistance have broadened to include lesser-known figures, such as Otto Weidt, Georg Elser or the ‘Silent Heroes,’ rendering these individuals more identifiable with, whilst reinforcing the notion that the ordinary German could indeed

⁶⁸ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.83.

⁶⁹ Stoltzfus, N., 1995. ‘Widerstand des Herzens. Der Protest und die deutsch-jüdische Mischehe’. *Geschichte & Gesellschaft*, 21, pp. 218-247.

⁷⁰ Dipper, C., 1996. ‘Schwierigkeiten mit der Resistenz’. *Geschichte & Gesellschaft*, 22, pp. 409-416.

⁷¹ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, pp.91-93.

do something, thus helping to build a critical understanding of the possibilities for resistance.⁷²

It is as a result of these shifts in resistance discourse, and their intersection with conceptions of identity yet to be discussed in this introduction, that the Rosenstraße resistance narrative has both emerged and become a significant part of the resistance heritage. It is nevertheless also a narrative that is difficult to reconcile with Germany's historical memory. The commitment to the aforementioned inclusivity, along with a focus on ordinary Germans, has facilitated interest in Rosenstraße, yet to some degree it is also paradoxical. Whilst it remains important in terms of contributing to understanding regime power and the potential to oppose it, there still exists a tendency to put protesters on a pedestal, to represent them as both ordinary yet heroic and ideal. It is this paradox that has been central to the way the protest has been remembered. It raises the question of whether the events contribute to, or detract from a critical, nuanced remembering, and in the case of the latter if they run the risk of returning understanding of resistance to the kind of biographical, moralising apologia that was both criticised and seemingly rejected during the resistance debate.⁷³ Certainly any heroisation of the protesters, rather than promoting a critical awareness, risks making them idealised, noble figures whose actions are far from replicable. This places the narrative at odds with the very premise of the new resistance tradition, and the self-image Germany wishes to project.

Yet the response, which the protest provokes, can only be fully understood when the protest's place in the resistance tradition is considered in relation to the shifting conceptions of national identity. In this thesis I argue that the Rosenstraße protest has proven problematic and examine why this is the case. However, I disagree that this results from either the interpretation of the protest's success, or indeed the fact that the protest took place at all. Through an analysis of the Rosenstraße narrative in context with on-going discourses of remembering, this thesis is able to show that although the

⁷² On the Silent Heroes see: Schoppmann, C., 2002. 'Rettung von Juden: ein kaum beachteter Widerstand von Frauen'. In: B. Kosmala and C. Schoppmann, eds. *Überleben im Untergrund: Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland 1941-1945*. Berlin: Metropol, pp.109-126. Schoppmann points out that whilst some people did aid Jewish Germans out of a sense of loyalty, others had less than altruistic intentions, and often only helped in the latter stages of the war when defeat became inevitable, so as to be able to suggest to the Allied occupying forces that they were opposed to the regime's anti-Semitism.

⁷³ Ibid.

shift towards inclusivity has facilitated memories of the protest, those memories are shaped by the competing desires for a historicization of the past (discussed separately in this chapter), and the wish to maintain an understanding of the period that does not give way to relativisation. This thesis argues that the long accepted view of the protest's success and the tendency to heroise the protesters is advocated by those who favour historicization but is opposed by those who desire to retain a memory based on a more complex reading, one in which German accountability is emphasised alongside recognition of resistance. It is these opposing interpretations, along with the implications of each reading for conceptions of identity, that underpin the historical debate and the competing memories of the protest.

v) Identity Debates and the Rosenstraße Protest

Given the aforementioned correlation between resistance and collective self-understanding, I argue that examining the Rosenstraße protest also necessitates consideration of its contribution to debates on national identity. Questions surrounding identity, specifically in relation to the impact of the Nazi past on conceptions of the self, remain ever pertinent, as recent comments by author Bernhard Schlink on the burden of being German highlight.⁷⁴ They are also far from new. Mary Fulbrook depicts German national identity post-1945 as fractured, reflecting both on the impact of defeat and on division.⁷⁵ With earlier notions of what it meant to be German rendered unacceptable, both Germanies sought to establish new and acceptable identities, which to a certain extent, as we have seen, drew on notions of opposition and resistance to Nazism. They identified positive traits, and key figures who could stand as forebears, positive figures distinguished from their Nazi 'other'.

Over the forty years of division separate conceptions of identity were developed, in part at least, against one another. The caesura of 1989, followed swiftly by political and economic unification in 1990, precipitated the search for a new German identity, one that would in Helmut Schmitz's words, "have to confront anew the legacy of National Socialism and the question as to what place the period of the Third Reich and the

⁷⁴ Connolly, K., 2012. 'Bernhard Schlink: Being German is a huge burden: Author and philosopher who has broken taboos in confronting Nazi past says war legacy haunts each successive generation'. *Guardian*, 17 September, p.1.

⁷⁵ Fulbrook, M., 1999. *German National Identity after the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.18.

Holocaust should occupy in the self-image of the new Germany.”⁷⁶ The end of division and unification ignited the search for national identity anew in order to foster a unified sense of identity that transcended the Cold War divisions. This process required Germans to look back to their most recent common past. Whilst a number of controversial debates (the most pertinent of these are addressed in this chapter) have kept questions of national identity at the forefront of public consciousness,⁷⁷ questions of identity in relation to Rosenstraße do not simply stem from the period since unification, or result directly from it. Unification rendered it more relevant, but, as the resistance debates outlined above have shown, it was built on a pre-existing interest in national identity, and in particular on questions of German-Jewish identity.

German self-understanding has undergone considerable transformation in the decades since the Second World War, and although there has never been only one sense of identity at any one time, broad, overarching trends are identifiable.⁷⁸ The 1950s for example are associated with a self-perception of Germans as victims of Nazism, a self-understanding that went hand-in-hand with reluctance to confront the past, and a tendency to see the Hitler period as an aberration, a time in which Germans had been criminally misled.⁷⁹ This eventually gave way to a new self-understanding as a result of both generational and social and political change in the 1960s, prompted in part by key events including the Adolf Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1960/61, and subsequent war crimes trials, most notably the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt between 1963 and 1965.⁸⁰ These trials served not only as uncomfortable reminders of the past, but also generated

⁷⁶ Schmitz, H., 2004. *On Their Own Terms: The Legacy of National Socialism in Post-1990 German Fiction*. Birmingham: Birmingham University Press, p.2.

⁷⁷ Schmitz, H., 2006. ‘The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the Historians’ Dispute to German Suffering’. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 93-108, here p. 93. See also Niven, 2002. *Facing the Nazi Past*, pp.1-9; Schmitz, 2004. *On Their Own Terms*, pp.1-9.

⁷⁸ Alter, R., and Monteath, P., eds., 1997. *History and Identity in the New Germany*. New Jersey: Atlantic Highlands Humanities Press; Knischewki, G., and Spittler, U., 1997. ‘Memories of the Second World War and National Identity in Germany’. In: M. Evans, and K. Lunn, eds., *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford and New York: Berg, pp.239-254; Maier, C.S., 1998. *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity*. 1st ed. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

⁷⁹ This reluctance to confront the past was identified by German psychologists Alexander and Margarethe Mitscherlich in their 1967 publication as an ‘inability to mourn’. See their: 1967. *Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern. Grundlagen kollektiven Verhaltens*. Munich: Piper. On self-identity as victim see also Bartov, O., 1998. ‘Defining Enemies, Making Victims: Germans, Jews and the Holocaust’. *The American Historical Review* 103(3), pp.771-816; Moeller, R.G., 2006. ‘The Politics of the Past in the 1950s: Rhetorics of Victimisation in East and West Germany’. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 26.40.

⁸⁰ Former Nazis were also tried in the GDR. This includes former Nazi and member of Adenauer’s cabinet Hans Maria Globke, who was tried in absentia.

complex debates on the nature and extent of involvement at every level of society, from the top-ranking officials to the ordinary German, in Nazi crimes. They coincided with the beginning of a period of generational change, with the children of the perpetrator generation (either born during the war but too young to remember it, or born shortly after it) coming of age, and being influenced by the new-found public awareness generated by these trials, able to articulate their own questions, and to confront the propensity towards amnesia on issues of the Nazi past amongst their parents' generation. This contributed to the burgeoning generational conflict, and helped to challenge conceptions of identity in which Germans saw themselves as victims, facilitating an engagement with Germany's Jewish past and with the Holocaust.⁸¹

Arguably the most intense interest in the German-Jewish past prior to unification can be seen in the response to the screening of the American NBC mini-series *Holocaust* in the FRG in January 1979. This not only brought questions of the German-Jewish past – including the theme of intermarriage – to the fore,⁸² but it also deepened interest in the Shoah, and in questions of German guilt and identity, opening up a space for new memories, and for new questions to emerge.⁸³ Yet, in spite of, or rather as a result of the interest in the Holocaust, a strong desire to draw a line under the Nazi past was also evident. This was articulated most notably through the Historians' Debate of 1986-7, in which conservatives pleaded for historicization of the Nazi period, i.e. to treat it as any other, and a sense of identity unencumbered by the crimes of the past. It effectively positioned recognition of German guilt, and of Jewish victimhood, in direct polarity to a conception of positive Germany identity, implying that through forgetting the latter could be achieved.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Fulbrook, M., 1999. *German National Identity after the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Fulbrook, M., 2000. *Interpretations of the Two Germanies, 1945 – 1990*. Basingstoke and London: Macmillan; Hartmann, G.H., ed., 1994. *Holocaust Remembrance. The Shapes of Memory*. Oxford: Blackwell; Langenbacher, E., 2003. 'Changing Memory Regimes in Contemporary Germany?' *German Politics and Society*, 21(2), pp.46-68.

⁸² The NBC mini-series, which told the story of the Holocaust through that of the fictional German-Jewish Weiss Family, prompted an unexpected, and intense public response when screened in the FRG in January 1979.

⁸³ It also had a wider impact in terms of contributing to the *Bundestag* debate on the statute of limitations for the prosecution of Nazi war crimes (*Verjährungsdebatte*). The temporal limitations of legal liability for crimes against humanity committed during the war, which could have expired in December 1979, was ultimately suspended. Dreisbach, T., 2009. 'Transatlantic Broadcasts: Holocaust in America and West Germany'. *Penn History Review* 16, pp.76-97, here p.77.

⁸⁴ Fulbrook, M., 2002. *History of Germany 1918 –2000: The Divided Nation*. Oxford: Blackwell; Kershaw, I., 2000. *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. London: Arnold.

Division over how to remember the Nazi past, already heightened by the end of the decade, continued following unification, propelled forward somewhat by the end of the Cold War as well as the need to reconsider the past, and what it meant to be German. As other observers have noted, whilst this prompted fears both within and outside of Germany of a resurgence of nationalism, unification brought with it both a greater interest in the Nazi period than ever before, and a willingness to confront it critically.⁸⁵ This included building on the pre-existing interest in the German-Jewish past, which, it has been suggested also became “a cipher, a way of avoiding inner German relations,”⁸⁶ while Jack Zipes perceives the post-unification interest in all aspects of Jewish life as a fascination.⁸⁷ Memories of the German-Jewish past have become an integral feature of discourses of identity, and have engendered questions on the nature of German and Jewish identity, on solidarity, on perpetration and on victimhood. The number of debates and controversies in recent years underlines the very significance of the subject: they include, but are by no means limited to the debates over the Holocaust memorial, the Crimes of the Wehrmacht exhibition and the role of the ordinary German in Nazi atrocities, the Goldhagen debate, and the Walser-Bubis debate, as well as discussion of German victimhood and wartime suffering. The Rosenstraße protest has by no means been a feature of all of these debates, as I explain below, but interest in it has been facilitated by this willingness to confront the past, which has reaffirmed the centrality of the Holocaust in discourses on remembering.

Broadly speaking, debates on the Nazi period have been divided into two categories: in the years immediately following unification the focus was on working through German guilt and responsibility, resulting in the “institutionalisation of Holocaust memory at

⁸⁵ On this see, amongst others, Alter, R., and Monteath, P., eds. 1997. ‘History and Identity in the New Germany’. New Jersey: Atlantic Highlands Humanities Press; Kershaw, I., 2000. *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. London: Arnold; Taberner, S., and Finlay, F., eds., 2002. *Recasting German Identity. Culture, Politics and Literature in the Berlin Republic*. Rochester: Camden House.

⁸⁶ Remmler, K., 2002. ‘Encounters Across the Void: Rethinking Approaches to German-Jewish Symbioses’. In: L. Morris and J. Zipes, eds. 2002. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis 1945-2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp.3-29, here p.23.

⁸⁷ Zipes, J., 1994. ‘The Contemporary Fascination For Things Jewish: Toward a Jewish Minority Culture’. In: S. Gilman and K. Remmler, eds. *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany. Life and Literature since 1989*. New York and London: New York University Press, pp.15-46. Notably the increase in Germany’s Jewish past was not restricted to the FRG but was also present in the GDR, albeit for different reasons, which will be explored in Chapter 6.

the heart of the Berlin Republic”.⁸⁸ This reinforced the extent of ordinary German citizens’ involvement in the Nazi regime. It also emphasised that Nazism symbolised the ‘other’ in conceptions of identity, everything that contemporary Germans do not wish to be.⁸⁹ At the turn of the millennium, however, German cultural memory underwent one of the largest shifts in recent decades to focus on German victimhood.⁹⁰ Although it was purported to be a taboo-breaking debate, this claim has been refuted by subsequent researchers, who have pointed to the parallels between the recent victimological discourse and German self-understanding in the 1950s.⁹¹

This shift in cultural memory has nevertheless had a significant impact on historical understanding and on self-perception. Memories of the Rosenstraße protest – and their implications for identity – have intensified and been most fiercely contested since the turn of the millennium. This raises the question of how we can understand its relevance vis-à-vis post-unification conceptions of national identity. The Rosenstraße protest would appear to intersect with debates on national identity in three different ways. Firstly, in the earliest years following unification, and in response to concerns over resurgent nationalism, it could be appropriated to respond to notions of an aggressive German identity, to demonstrate the existence of a positive German-Jewish relationship, and the potential for solidarity, as well as ethnic and religious tolerance both then and now, with the protesters functioning as role models, upon whom a positive national identity could be based. This is particularly evident in the works of Gernot Jochheim.

Secondly, from the mid-1990s onwards, the protest could also serve as a counter to notions of uniform German anti-Semitism, providing an appealing, alternative conception of identity based on a more differentiated understanding of the German-

⁸⁸ Schmitz, H., and Seidel-Aparci, A., eds. 2011. Narratives of Trauma: Discourses of German Wartime Suffering in National and International Perspective. *German Monitor*, 73, pp.1-7, here p.3

⁸⁹ Niven, 2002. *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.5.

⁹⁰ Op.Cit., p.3.

⁹¹ See amongst others: Berger, S., 2006. ‘On Taboos, Traumas, and Other Myths: Why the Debate about German Victims of the Second World War is not a Historians’ Controversy.’ In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 210-223, here p.217; Moeller, R.G., 2005. ‘Germans as Victims? Thoughts on Post-Cold War History of World War Two’s Legacy’. *History & Memory*, 17, pp. 145-194; Schmitz, H., 2006. ‘The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the ‘Historians’ Dispute’ to German Suffering’. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 93-108.

Jewish relationship. This has been articulated in Nina Schröder's biography, von Trotta's film, in the historical debate and in memorialisation.

Thirdly, the Rosenstraße protest can be tied into victimhood discourses. The implicit suggestion in the argument for a more differentiated understanding of the German-Jewish relationship is that intermarried Germans have hitherto been denied recognition, not simply for their part in the protest but also for the suffering and hardship they experienced, ergo they should be seen as victims of Nazism, and more problematically as victims of Nazi anti-Semitism alongside their Jewish spouses. This was both particularly apparent and fiercely contested in the historical debate of 2003-2004. The correlation between identity and the Rosenstraße protest has changed over time but it also reflects the changing attitudes towards the Nazi past.

vi) Normalization and its usage

Throughout this thesis the concept of normalization recurs. Whilst it is debatable as to whether it is possible for any nation to be 'normal', the term is common in existing scholarship on Germany since 1945, hence it is also addressed here. In order to do so I consider what is meant by the term and how it manifests itself in relation to the representations of the Rosenstraße protest examined in this thesis?

The term normalization is ambiguous. Although there is no single definition, broadly speaking it relates to the processes by which Germany has sought to define itself in relation to its National Socialist past, allowing it to develop into a 'normal' nation state or rather, "one without the particular status afforded by its 20th century history."⁹² That is to say the desire for normalization, it seems, reflects the desire to historicize the National Socialist past so that the era 1933-1945 may be treated as any other, earlier period in German history, and without the moral and ethical issues associated with the period's interpretation. The desire for some form of normalization is neither entirely new nor is it exclusive to the post-unification age. In the 1980s, Chancellor Kohl's version of normality and the attendant ideas perpetuated in and through the *Historikerstreit* provide just such an example. However, before 1989, the very existence of the two Germanies, had served as a persistent reminder of the Nazi past.

⁹² Schmitz and Seidel-Aparci, *Narratives of Trauma*, p.8.

Prior to unification, concepts of normalization tended to be championed by those on the political Right, and were often problematic. After 1990, and after the political shifts following the Red-Green coalition, the idea was also taken up by those on the political Left.⁹³ Hence, with unification, the possibility that Germany may become a normal nation – whatever we mean by it – seemed more realistic, and as such it should not be ignored.

Whilst, as I indicated above, there is no single definition of what normalization means, throughout this thesis I base my understanding on Stuart Taberner's definitions, which I outline below. According to Taberner, three different forms of normality can be identified – longitudinal, latitudinal and ahistorical.⁹⁴ Primarily, as this thesis shows, we are concerned with and find examples of what Taberner terms 'longitudinal normality'. This looks to 'German norms' located in its own past and tends to be favoured by conservative thinkers.⁹⁵ According to Taberner it "seeks to contextualise the Hitler period and to reclaim other more positive aspects of German heritage for the purposes of shaping a more confident German identity."⁹⁶ Longitudinal normality emphasises contemporary values, whilst the Nazi past epitomises everything contemporary Germany aims not to be. That is not to suggest, however, that normalization – even if it is actually attainable – is desired by all; indeed the reluctance to embrace it can also be found in the representations of the protest, and in the debates surrounding the different representations.

With regard to the representations of the Rosenstraße protest, normalization manifests itself in a number of ways, including the historical disputes over the protest from the Stoltzfus-Dipper exchange (1995-1996) to the historical debate in late 2003. We also find it in Gernot Jochheim's popular history in his emphasis on German-Jewish solidarity, on the notion of the Jewish fighter figure, and the suggestion of a positive

⁹³ Taberner, S. and Cooke, P., eds., 2006. *German Culture, Politics and Literature into the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Normalization*. Rochester and New York: Camden House, p.4

⁹⁴ Examples of latitudinal normality, according to Taberner, are to be found in the way in which Germany seeks to be a progressive, law-abiding state similar to Britain, France and the US, which does not attempt to forget its past, but does suggest it has now learned the lessons of it. The third form is identified as 'ahistorical normality', which is exemplified in allusions to 1920s modernity. However, this is not a feature of Schröder's text.

⁹⁵ Taberner, S., 2005a. *German Literature of the 1990s and Beyond. Normalization and the Berlin Republic*. Rochester: Camden House, pp. xiv-xviii.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p.xvii.

German-Jewish symbiosis, as well as in Nina Schröder's biography, both from the perspective of the biographer and in the witness testimonies.

vii) Theoretical Framework and Methodology

This thesis adopts cultural memory theory in interpreting the multiple representations of the protest in Rosenstraße. This approach both facilitates analysis of the individual representations but also how they interact with, and build upon one another. Through an examination of each representation in its socio-political context, it becomes possible to understand the influences and trends, which have shaped their individual production, what notions have emerged as a consequence, and in turn, shaped understanding at the level of the collective. This approach recognises that representations are both reflective of and play an active part in shaping a society – in terms of its culture, its values and interests at any given point in time, impacting on its self-perception, on identity formation. In an examination of multiple representations over a period of time, employing cultural memory theory also enables us to understand how and why attitudes have shifted. Focusing on the period since unification allows for an insight into the changing attitudes towards the Nazi past in the formative years of unified Germany, revealing how they have been shaped. It also allows for an examination of the shifts in patterns of remembering, highlighting the way in which memories are both politically and socially rooted. In addition, the interaction between different cultural actors in shaping representations of the past can also be taken into consideration. As this study of the Rosenstraße protest shows, different cultural actors have been involved at different times. These include popular historians, biographers and memorial actors in the first instance, but also how at a later stage, these have ceded in influence to mainstream professional historians, and cultural actors including filmmakers and commemorative institutions.⁹⁷

Memory is always socially constructed. Following the theories of French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, when an individual remembers, they do so as a member of a group, or groups. Every individual belongs to a number of groups, ranging from the

⁹⁷ Grassroots initiatives have been long been a feature of historical work in Germany, gaining prominence from the later 1970s onwards, and have been particularly influential where the earliest post-unification representations of the Rosenstraße protest are concerned as both chapters 3 & 6 of this thesis demonstrate.

family up to and including the nation. The individual does not, in short, remember in a vacuum, their memories are not isolated, rather they relate to the wider context. Moreover, these remembrances also alter in accordance with changes in our relationship to the collective.⁹⁸ At the national level, for example, remembrance alters as society changes: we can see this at points when a new generation emerges, such as 1968 and 1989. Halbwachs argued that collective memories served the social need for unity, for cohesion, also illuminating “why society tends to erase from its memory all that might separate individuals, or that might distance groups from each other.”⁹⁹ This observation helps to explain, for example, the tendency in post-war Germany towards a collective amnesia around the Nazi past and its criminality, but also conversely why, following unification, we have witnessed a newly intensified need to remember. According to Halbwachs, individual memories are always influenced and refracted through wider social frameworks of remembering.¹⁰⁰ When we consider the way the Rosenstraße protest has been remembered, we therefore need to consider the context in which these memories emerged, and why they were appealing.

Jan Assmann similarly argues that memories are socially mediated. However, he also distinguishes between two different types of memory and their processes, with communicative memory on the one hand, and cultural memory on the other.¹⁰¹ Communicative memory, according to Assmann, is essentially biographical in nature drawing on the relatively recent past. It is transmitted in everyday communications – such as communications between members of a family or group – and “characterized by a high degree of non specialization, reciprocity of roles (i.e. the narrator becomes the listener and vice versa), thematic instability, and disorganization.”¹⁰² That is to say it is unlikely to follow a clear, organised narrative structure, and may vacillate between different subjects and themes. Communicative memory has a limited temporal horizon

⁹⁸ Halbwachs, M., 2011. ‘The Collective Memory’. In: J.K. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy, eds. *The Collective Memory Reader*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 139–49, here p.142.

⁹⁹ Halbwachs, M., 1992. *On Collective Memory*, introduced and translated by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, here p.183. The English translation by Mary Douglas was published under the title *Collective Memory*, New York: Harper and Row, 1980 but is now out of print. For ease of reference citations therefore refer to this subsequent volume by Coser, or to the translations of Halbwachs’ work in Olick et al.

¹⁰⁰ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, p.183.

¹⁰¹ Assmann, J., 1995. ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’, translated by John Czaplicka, *New German Critique*, 65, pp.125-133, here p.127.

¹⁰² Assmann, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’ 1995, p.126.

of eighty to one hundred years, or three to four generations, and will disappear unless it can be fixed, that is unless it can be integrated into cultural memory.¹⁰³ As this thesis shows, the earlier representations of the Rosenstraße protest are notable for their use of first generation memories. These are used both to bolster and to challenge hegemonic interpretations. Given that the time in which gathering memories that are rooted in historical experience is drawing to a close, this thesis considers whether the imminent passing of the first generation lends their memories a greater legitimacy, even if later memories have been heavily influenced by their existing cultural counterparts, and secondly if this prioritisation of these private memories is symptomatic of a shift towards a more empathetic dialogue on the past.¹⁰⁴

It is, however, cultural memories that are the principle focus of this thesis. “Cultural memory,” according to Assmann, “preserves the store of knowledge from which a group derives an awareness of its unity and peculiarity.”¹⁰⁵ In contrast to communicative memory, cultural memory focuses on a fixed point in time, namely “fateful events of the past, whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance).”¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, “cultural memory comprises that body of reusable texts, images and rituals specific to each society in each epoch, whose “cultivation” serves to stabilize and carry that society’s self-image.”¹⁰⁷ This is known as the cultural memory paradigm.

Although we talk of cultural memory as if it were singular, Assmann argues that it exists in two forms: firstly, in the mode of potentiality of the archive (*Speichergedächtnis*), and secondly, in the mode of actuality (*Funktionsgedächtnis*). To put it simply, individuals, be they novelists, historians, filmmakers, or artists, activate, that is to say they actualise potential cultural memories, such as those contained within archives in the form of texts, images and rules of conduct, creating narratives. It is in

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp.127-8.

¹⁰⁴ As the following chapter demonstrates, the historical debate of 2003, and the two-day conference: Protest in der Rosenstraße: Zwischen Akten und Erinnerung, held in Berlin in April 2004 placed eyewitnesses in direct conflict with historians, doubting the legitimacy of historians’ interpretations where these differed from their own memories.

¹⁰⁵ Assmann, ‘Collective Memory and Cultural Identity’, p.129.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p.132.

the mode of actuality that meaning can be found. Contemporary context puts the meaning of memories into perspective, lending it its own relevance. As memories shift, so too do their meaning and significance. Memories of the Rosenstraße protest (that are now commonplace) remained merely ‘potential’ until they were shaped into various narratives – from the popular accounts, to the historical, filmic and even memorial interpretations – and it is in each context that they must be understood for their meaning to be deduced. Assmann argues that it is through its cultural heritage that “a society becomes visible to itself and to others. Which past becomes evident in that heritage and which values emerge in its identificatory appropriation tells us much about the constitution and tendencies of a society.”¹⁰⁸ We can see the cultural memory paradigm at work through the development of the different representations of the Rosenstraße protest examined in this thesis, and how, as the protest has been increasingly represented, understanding of the past and its significance has altered accordingly.

In order to comprehend fully the significance of memory discourses as outlined above, and why they are strongly contested, it is necessary to see memory as intrinsically bound to collective identity. National identity can be described as a construct – one that is revised and modified repeatedly, rooted in historical experience, but reflecting the contemporary social and political context. This constructivist understanding of national identity has been developed by scholars including Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger, Tony Judt and Mary Fulbrook. According to Benedict Anderson, the origins of national identity formation are to be found in social and cultural institutions, and it emerged as a result of print capitalism and the standardisation of the education system, both of which helped foster a sense of shared belonging to the nation.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger point to the ‘invention of tradition’ in order to foster a sense of social cohesion and identity,¹¹⁰ whilst Tony Judt argues that identities “are always complex compositions of myth, memory and political convenience.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p.133.

¹⁰⁹ Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁰ Hobsbawm, E., and Ranger, T., eds., 1993. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.263. See also Thompson, A., 2001. ‘Nations, national identity and human agency: putting the people back into nations’. *The Sociological Review*, 49 (1), pp.18-32.

¹¹¹ Judt, T., 1992. ‘The Past is Another Country: Myth, Memory and Postwar Europe’. *Daedalus* 121:4, pp. 83-118, here p.112, Smith, A.D., 1991. *National Identity*. London: Penguin, p.11 and p.14.

This theoretical framework acknowledges that for concepts of identity to work, they must be “politically viable, socially reproduced and strike or echo popular chords.”¹¹² Identity is rooted in shared or common history, collective memory, myths, traditions, shared values as well as common individual experiences, and it is formed at different levels, both official and popular.¹¹³ It follows that the more widespread the sense of shared historical legacy, the more likely it is that a sense of collective identity will emerge and succeed. As Mary Fulbrook argues, whilst the work of historians plays a role in this process, other media, such as the novel, film, museum exhibits and commemorations have a greater impact on constructions of identity.¹¹⁴ However, whilst a sense of identity is bound to collective memories of a shared past, it does not automatically follow that these have to be positive, evoking moments of triumph and heroism. Rather, they may also be grounded in loss and crisis, turning a time of tragedy into one of triumph.¹¹⁵ The Rosenstraße protest is arguably a case in point. In representations of the protest, the trauma of the Factory-Action and the Holocaust is sometimes turned on its head, inasmuch as the events are re-imagined as a triumph of German-Jewish solidarity.

Whilst memory and identity are inextricably bound to one another, as Wulf Kansteiner argues in his critique of collective memory studies, there is no direct correlation between the past and what is remembered. Just because an event took place, it does not automatically signify that it will be remembered. Kansteiner argues that whilst some events are excluded from collective memory, others are also adopted for identity purposes, but that memories “only assume collective relevance when they are structured, represented, and used in a social setting.”¹¹⁶ He further argues the media of memory which help us both to construct and to transmit knowledge, as well as feelings about the past, “rely on various combinations of discursive, visual, and spatial

¹¹² Fulbrook, M., 1999. *German National Identity after the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.12.

¹¹³ Ibid., pp.16-18.

¹¹⁴ Fulbrook, M., 2000. ‘Re-presenting the Nation: History and Identity in East and West Germany’. In: M. Fulbrook and M. Swales, ed. 2000. *Representing the German Nation: History and Identity in Twentieth Century Germany*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, pp.172-189, here p.185.

¹¹⁵ Renan, E., 2011. ‘What is a Nation?’ In: J.K. Olick, V.Vinitzky-Seroussi and D. Levy, eds. *The Collective Memory Reader*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 80-83.

¹¹⁶ Kansteiner, W., 2002. ‘Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies’. *History and Thought* 41, pp.179-197, here, p.190.

elements”, making collective memories “multimedia collages”; however, these cannot simply be reconstructed in their entirety, rather it is necessary “to focus on one or two layers at a time.”¹¹⁷ This approach is adopted in this thesis, inasmuch as the diverse representations of the Rosenstraße protest are examined successively as layers of collective memory, in order to highlight and analyse the shifts and developments in the collective memory of the Rosenstraße protest.

However, whilst Kansteiner’s approach provides a framework for analysis, there is also a need for a more comprehensively structured approach to this analysis. Building on the idea of layers of memory, I also draw on and adapt the model proposed by Herfried Münkler in his study of collective memory in the GDR. He argues that cultural memories are shaped and conveyed via three different media, namely narrative, iconic and ritual. The narrative mode is constituted of a range of sources, from historiography and fiction through to political texts, whilst the iconic mode is made up of monuments and memorials situated in public places and historically significant locations, and the ritual mode consists of public gatherings and commemorative events.¹¹⁸ These three modes, according to Münkler, add to and mutually influence one another; with the narrative form providing the basis. This interrelation between the different modes offers a structure for analysis that can be adapted to this thesis, supplementing Kansteiner’s approach. If we take the historiographical debate as the lynchpin around which all other representations orientate themselves, we are able to see clearly the development of the Rosenstraße protest in German cultural memory at every stage. We can see that the different representations analysed here orientate themselves in line with, or against the historiographical trends at the time of their production, but that they also influence them in turn. The historiographical trends are thus central to understanding the other cultural representations, and the dynamics of how and why the Rosenstraße protest is remembered today, as well as how it has changed and what this indicates.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p.191.

¹¹⁸ Münkler, H., 1997. ‘Das kollektive Gedächtnis der DDR’. In: D. Vorsteher, ed. *Parteiauftrag: Ein Neues Deutschland, Bilder, Rituale und Symbole der frühen DDR*. Munich and Berlin: Koehler and Amelang, pp.458-468, here p.465. In the original German text, Münkler refers to *Denkmale* and *Mahnmale*. Rather than enter into a discussion of these two terms here, I will address the distinctions between them in Chapter 6.

What is also apparent throughout is the constructed nature of remembering. Events are not relayed as they happened, and it is important to distinguish between the actual events that happened and the ‘mythical’ events, or representations that have come to describe and relay those events. For ‘mythical’ events to emerge, the data gathered about any particular event, those memories that form the aforementioned *Speichergedächtnis*, must be organised into a logical and coherent narrative structure. As Alan Munslow argues, “facts are literally meaningless in their unprocessed state [but] gain further meaning when they are organised [...] in a story producing a particular, appealing, followable, but above all a convincing relationship.”¹¹⁹ Stuart Hall and Hayden White have shown narrative construction to be a structured process, whereby the author or cultural actor selects his/her data, structuring and contextualising them so that the events conveyed may be understood within their contemporary frames of reference.¹²⁰ Hall describes the process as one of ‘encoding’, and sees it as the first of two stages in the communication of meaning.¹²¹

Once encoded, any narrative can be decoded in order to deduce meaning, by considering the way language is used, more specifically the figurative devices known as tropes or figures of speech, the principal ones being metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony. ‘Troping’ signifies the process of shifting the description of an event, in the case of the Rosenstraße Protest, “away from one meaning” thus creating “further, different and possibly even multiple meanings”.¹²² However, the communication of meaning is dependent on the shared frameworks of reference and knowledge between the communicator and the audience. It is only through placing the narratives in their wider socio-political context, as I do in this thesis, that their meaning and the reasons for the choice of perspective can be explained.

At each stage of this thesis, I therefore consider the way in which memories have been structured by appropriating Helmut Peitsch’s working formula that “whenever memory is invoked we should be asking ourselves: by whom, where, in which context, against what?”¹²³ This will show the shifting dynamics in remembering the protest in

¹¹⁹ Munslow, A., 1997. *Deconstructing History*. London and New York: Routledge, p.6.

¹²⁰ Hall, S., 1973. *The Structured Communication of Events*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press, pp. 274-75.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.276.

¹²² Hayden White, cited here in: Munslow, 1997. *Deconstructing History*, p.11.

¹²³ Peitsch, H., 1999. ‘Introduction’. In: H. Peitsch, C. Burdett, and C. Gorarra, eds. *European Memories of the Second World War*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn, p.xx. Peitsch’s argumentation builds on the

Rosenstraße and the ways in which it has been appropriated in the Berlin Republic to convey notions of identity, of what it means to be German.

viii) Thesis Structure

I have structured this thesis to reflect both the centrality of historiography in remembrance of the Rosenstraße protest and the shifting patterns of memory. My principal aim has been to reflect the transition from a newly unified Germany preoccupied with debates over the legitimacy of the nation state, increased nationalism and far-right xenophobia in the early 1990s, to a nation with an increasingly pluralized and contested sense of its heritage, asking how this is reflected in and through cultural memories of the protest in the last twenty years.¹²⁴

The sequence of chapters is not strictly chronological, because the representations of the Rosenstraße protest in the different media overlap one another. Historiography is examined first, in order to identify the key issues and make the shifting patterns of interpretation comprehensible within the context of the wider social, political and cultural frameworks contemporaneous to them. In the process, an indication is given of when and how they intersect with the cultural representations subsequently examined. I then focus on the earliest of the post-unification texts, which emerged in the genres of popular history and biography, in Chapters 3 and 4. These were formative texts, which not only made the events accessible to a larger audience, but also highlighted the shortcomings of historical research. Although they have tended to be overlooked in recent years, they nevertheless offer an insight into phases of remembrance from the beginning of the 1990s (a period in which, as Jane Kramer argues, Germans were “absorbed in an elaborate exercise in “solidarity” if not identification with Hitler’s victims”) through to the early 2000s, before interest in the protest peaked in late 2003–2004.¹²⁵ The turn of the millennium marks a step-change in engagement with the events, moving away from the period dominated by popular grassroots initiatives, to

hypotheses proposed by Randolph Starn and Natalie Zemon Davis. See: Zemon Davis, N., and Starn, R., 1989. Introduction. *Representations* 26, pp. 1-6.

¹²⁴ See in particular Jarausch, K., 1997. ‘Normalization or Renationalization? On Reinterpreting the German Past’, pp.23-39 and Betz, H.G., ‘Perplexed Normalcy: German Identity After Unification’, pp.40-64 In: R. Alter, and P. Monteath, eds. 1997. *History and Identity in the New Germany*. New Jersey: Atlantic Highlands Humanities Press.

¹²⁵ Kramer, J., 1996. *The Politics of Memory. Looking for Germany in the New Germany*. New York: Random House, p.261.

one in which cultural memories have been generated at a more institutional level, particularly through film and memorialisation. These are examined in Chapters 5 and 6, before conclusions and speculations on the likely future direction of remembering are drawn in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2, entitled ‘Der eigentliche Streitwert: Historical Debate and the Rosenstraße Protest’, locates the events within Germany’s resistance heritage. It discusses the trends and implications of the historical debate over Rosenstraße. The controversy of 2003-2004 is often taken as a starting point in public discussion of Rosenstraße and debate between leading historians of the field.¹²⁶ However, Chapter 2 illustrates that we need to look further back. The first section shows how it took until the mid 1990s for the subject to gain significant attention from academics. Yet, when it did, it followed swiftly on from the ‘Resistance Debate’, discussed earlier. The resulting discussion led to a small, if fierce dispute amongst a select few academics, which both showed the fragility of the new consensus at this point in time, and forged the dynamics of the future Rosenstraße debate. By the time the Rosenstraße protest had become a subject of public debate in late 2003, the divisions between historians were firmly entrenched.

The second section focuses on the public debate of 2003-2004 drawing on texts in the press, conference papers, articles in academic journals, and contributions to online discussion forums as the basis for analysis. It outlines how the debate has developed, noting that it has begun to take on some of the patterns and traits of the Goldhagen debate, in terms of tone and sentiment, particularly at the point in which the debate was played out in the public media.¹²⁷ It highlights how the shift in public discourses towards the preoccupation with re-discovering German victimhood in the intervening years is relevant to the dispute over the protest’s significance. The openness to this new victimological discourse, it has been suggested, resulted in part from the focus on German perpetration and the institutionalisation of the Holocaust memory in the Berlin

¹²⁶ I use the term discussions here very broadly to include discussions of Rosenstraße in other media, in particular in articles and chapters relating to the film, rather than just to the historical dispute.

¹²⁷ In particular the use of the press is significant here. Like the Historians’ Debate in the 1980s, the Goldhagen debate was conducted largely in the German media. To a lesser extent Rosenstraße has followed suit, with not only the press serving as a battleground, but also some of the sentiments expressed, in particular suggestions of the press’s influence and favouritism, revealing the prevailing tensions and prejudices within the debate.

Republic in the preceding decade.¹²⁸ Consequently, memories of German suffering previously blocked by the right's instrumentalisation of them, and by the left's reluctance to acknowledge them, acquired a new legitimacy and rapidly gained in popularity.¹²⁹ It is unsurprising, but significant, that interest in the Rosenstraße protest peaked at this time, in the year in which, as Aleida Assmann argues, questions of German suffering “returned with a unique and unexpected impact.”¹³⁰ Given this broader discourse the empathy expressed towards the protesters, and the critical response to the suggestion that they had not successfully forced the regime to concede, are understandable.

Yet, the intensity of the debate underscores the problematic nature of that remembering, no matter how progressive. As this chapter shows, attempts to position the protesters at Rosenstraße within the wider category of victims, and more pointedly, as Holocaust victims, resulted in a problematic comparison between victim groups, whose suffering, whilst related, was nonetheless incomparable. Whilst there is no denial that intermarried non-Jewish spouses suffered, their experiences cannot simply be equated to those of Holocaust victims. The implications of such a comparison – one involving the elision of difference between non-Jewish and Jewish Germans as victims of Nazism, and even in some cases as the identification of the former as greater victims – are central to the debate over the Rosenstraße protest at this stage. Whilst the desire to relativise the past for the sake of a version of German identity that draws on positive examples from the Third Reich, remains visible today, it has seemingly declined in intensity. In recent years there has been a historiographical trend towards questioning not only the protest's success but also its significance.¹³¹ This reflects both the concern that German-centred remembering could otherwise displace memories of Jewish suffering, and the desire to prevent this from happening, which in itself is an indicator of attitudes towards the Nazi past and the Holocaust.

Chapter 3 is entitled ‘Patterns of Popular History between 1990 and 2002: Shifting Attitudes in Gernot Jochheim's *Protest in der Rosenstraße*. Since 1990, author and

¹²⁸ Schmitz, H., and Seidel-Aparci, A., 2011. *Narratives of Trauma*, p.3.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p.1 See also: Assmann, A., 2006. ‘On the (In)Compatibility of German Guilt and Suffering in German Memory’. *German Life & Letters*, 59:2, pp.187-200.

¹³⁰ Assmann, ‘On the (In)Compatibility of German Guilt and Suffering in German Memory’, p.188.

¹³¹ This shift is also reflected in other media of memory, particularly in memorialisation as Chapter 6 shows.

Berlin school teacher Gernot Jochheim has published three versions of his work on the protest. The first, a work of Young Adult Literature, was published in 1990. After moving to the Berlin-based publisher Hentrich & Hentrich, Jochheim republished his work twice in 1993 and again in 2002 as a combined popular history and documentary-style book, bringing historiographical trends to a lay audience, and generating awareness of issues over memorialisation projects. Popular history, as Robert G. Moeller reminds us, is far more accessible and likely to be read than the monographs written by academic historians.¹³² That is to say that it generates a greater awareness of past events, and can have a greater influence over public opinion than academic writing, not least because of its accessibility and readability. Yet, hitherto no examination of Jochheim's texts has been conducted.

Jochheim's text is framed by the socio-political context of the 1980s, i.e. by the cultural shift towards discourses on the German-Jewish past discussed earlier in relation to the US mini-series *Holocaust*, the burgeoning trend in grassroots history, and opposition to the conservative backlash of the decade that sought to draw a line under the Nazi past. Originally written as a work of fiction, Jochheim's *Protest in der Rosenstraße* creates a transgenerational dialogue between the protagonist, Hans Grossmann, now an elderly gentleman, and its readers, recounting his life and survival as a teenager, and so-called 'Mischling' or 'partial Jew' during the Third Reich. He charts his experiences from school through detention in Rosenstraße and involvement in Jewish underground resistance, down to his flight into illegality, capture and release at the end of the war.

Jochheim's text, coupled with the changes and developments across the later editions, points to the pedagogic imperative of remembering the events, and blind spots in historical research at that time, as well as the tensions over memorial representation. In the 2002 edition, however, Jochheim stressed the advances in historical research and memorialisation. This focus on Jochheim's texts allows for an analysis of representations of the Rosenstraße protest in the early, formative years of unified Germany, at a time when questions of national identity and the legacy of the Third Reich were especially prominent in public consciousness. It also provides an insight into the changing function of the Rosenstraße protest in German cultural memory,

¹³² Moeller, R.G., 2005. 'Germans as Victims? Thoughts on Post-Cold War History of World War Two's Legacy'. *History & Memory* 17, pp. 145-194, here pp.181-182.

moving from a position that challenged accepted knowledge of the past, questioned the status quo, and encouraged engagement with the events, to one that has become increasingly homogenised with the historical interpretations proposed by Gruner and Meyer.

This chapter also illustrates the interplay between different media of memory. Whilst popular history contributed to public awareness, it also provided a platform from which to publicise the achievements of some cultural actors, such as the students behind the temporary exhibition, as well as the struggles facing cultural actors (most notably Ingeborg Hunzinger) in seeking to commemorate the events. It also reveals how popular history has been overlaid by accounts in other media, most notably through the shifts in the author's position on whether the release of the detainees resulted from the protest. As one of the earliest texts available in German, *Protest in der Rosenstrasse* arguably contributed to the realisation of Margarethe von Trotta's later film *Rosenstraße* – an angle that will be explored in Chapter 5.¹³³ Jochheim's popular history, I demonstrate, may be seen as an expression of both concern at the potential for re-nationalisation in the wake of unification, and also the desire for a positive sense of national identity predicated on a remembering of resistance and opposition to Jewish persecution. Analysis of the way in which Jochheim's text treats the themes of nationalism, xenophobia and the German-Jewish relationship reveals it embraces the assimilationist model of German-Jewish identity, a model that has subsequently been adopted in other cultural representations, most notably in von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*.¹³⁴

Jochheim's text re-imagines the German-Jewish relationship in a positive light. It focuses on an over-riding sense of solidarity, and unity, that overcomes instances of German-Jewish hostility. It alludes to the notion of a German-Jewish symbiosis, the idea of the productive proximity of German and Jewish cultures in the nineteenth and

¹³³ Whilst von Trotta claims her film is based on eyewitness interviews she conducted with survivors, there has been some dispute, particularly with American historian Nathan Stoltzfus, over where she drew her inspiration. Parallels to his *Resistance of the Heart* can be read into the film. Many of the eyewitnesses cited by Stoltzfus also provided testimony to Jochheim, and there are a number of parallels to Jochheim's text within the film as well. In particular the character of Clara Grossmann in his text, bears some degree of comparison von Trotta's character Lena Fischer. Given that the original scripts were drafted in 1995, it seems likely that Jochheim's text provided a foundation for von Trotta's character development in her *Rosenstraße*.

¹³⁴ I will explore this angle in further detail in Chapter 5. See also: Taberner, S., 2005. 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film: Aimée und Jaguar, Rosenstraße and Das Wunder von Bern'. *German Life and Letters*, pp. 357-372.

early twentieth centuries, beginning in the Age of Enlightenment, and supported by the legal equality granted to German Jews in 1848, as well as intermarriage. Jochheim's text thus encourages its largely non-Jewish audience to embrace the ideal – once more held by Jewish than non-Jewish Germans. By re-imagining the German-Jewish relationship as a strong, reciprocal one that survived the era of National Socialism, Jochheim suggests it may now be embraced once again, and the past may thus be overcome. He constructs an identity that reflects the hopes as well as the fears of the early 1990s, rejects violence and racism, and embraces difference, tolerance and civic courage, by evoking a past unity that in reality never existed. Jochheim's text encourages an emotional identification between reader and protagonist. It is also one of the earliest post-unification texts to engage with the notions of German suffering and loss, aligning them, problematically, with the suffering experienced by Jewish Germans. In the most recent edition of his work, Jochheim explains to his reader that he now rejects the notion that the protest was a success. This, I suggest, is indicative of the changing function of the Rosenstraße narrative from a stabilising, founding narrative to a more questioning one, that in turn reflects the changes in Germany's coming-to-terms with its Nazi past.

Chapter 4, entitled 'Multiple perspectives: Competing biographical memories in Nina Schröder's *Die Frauen der Rosenstraße: Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*', focuses on personal accounts of the protest as told by eight participants. It was first published in 1997, and a revised edition was published in September 2003 to coincide with the release of Margarethe von Trotta's film. Schröder's text sets out to generate awareness, but also to question assumptions about resistance and Jewish persecution, against the backdrop of socio-political and cultural discourses that focused on the idea of the ordinary German as perpetrator. Key debates of the 1990s, such as that over the Crimes of the Wehrmacht exhibition, and the Goldhagen controversy, had already made clear the extent to which ordinary Germans were complicit in everyday life in the crimes of the Nazis. Schröder's text questions the argument that Germans were either complicit or uniformly anti-Semitic, and prioritises instead notions of German heroism, defiance of the Nazi regime, solidarity, civic courage and altruism, in order to foster a more positive conception of German identity.

Following a similar format to Gernot Jochheim's popular histories, Schröder's text invests in the idea of generation, and trans-generational dialogue between members of the first, experiential, and later generations. This also reflects broader trends in memory debates of the 1990s, which, according to Anne Fuchs, "were characterized by a huge investment in the idea of generation."¹³⁵ Through the use of extradiegetic narration, Schröder – herself a member of the third post-war generation – fosters a trans-generational dialogue between the eyewitness and the reader, providing a forum for competing and conflicting personal memories to be anchored at the level of public discourse.

The testimonies recounted here do not all subscribe to the interpretation of a successful protest, rather they place emphasis on the act of protest itself, and the existence of continued solidarity. By juxtaposing competing interpretations, Schröder leaves readers to draw their own conclusions. The use of biographical memory, with its concomitant connotations of authenticity, may suggest, however, that experiential memories yield 'the truth' about events in a way that other forms of representation cannot replicate. It creates a degree of proximity between members of the first generation and the reader that fosters an emotional identification, a defence of the ideas and values that emerge in the course of that dialogue. But it also results in a loss of objectivity. Schröder's text points to the prevailing attitudes towards the Nazi past and German identity in the latter years of the 1990s, but also the desire for a more empathetic understanding of that past prior to the shift in wider cultural discourses towards a focus on German wartime suffering. The few changes that were made to the 2003 edition further underline the emotional investment in the Rosenstraße protest and identification with its participants. Schröder's text expands understanding of the protest and intermarriage during the Third Reich, whilst highlighting the tensions and conflicts within their remembrance.

Chapter 5, From the Original Draft to the Cinema Screen: Memory and Identity in Transition in Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*, examines the veteran film director's award winning 2003 film. It considers its contribution to discourses on the Nazi past and conceptions of identity at the beginning of the millennium.¹³⁶ The film is

¹³⁵ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.3.

¹³⁶ Hailey, J., 2005. Awards for *Rosenstrasse* (2003). Available from: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0298131/awards> [Accessed 8th November 2009]. Margarethe von Trotta

shown to be influenced by historiographical and cultural representations already examined in this thesis, and broader trends in cultural memory, as well as by specific changes to and in the German film industry since the 1990s. Aside from developments in historical research, it is von Trotta's film that has garnered the most scholarly attention of all the representations of the protest.¹³⁷ Yet, thus far commentators have mostly either focused on *Rosenstraße* briefly, or examined one specific aspect. Almost a decade after its cinematic release, this chapter sets out to provide a more comprehensive reading of the film, incorporating aspects that have yet to be considered, and arguing that *Rosenstraße* needs to be re-read as a more complex, critical, yet problematic film. It was widely criticised at the time of its release by historians, journalists, and film critics, yet it proved popular with audiences in Germany, remaining in some cinemas for up to six months. This factor attests both to its appeal and to the commercial viability of films about the Nazi past.¹³⁸ Consequently, I argue that the film has played a significant role in shaping public understanding of the events.

The chapter asks how von Trotta's film reconfigures memory of the historical events, and considers the reasons why the film was finally commissioned in 2002; seven years after the director's original screenplays had been rejected, raising the question of whether the adoption of a narrative style more in line with the Hollywood format, than with the New German Cinema style von Trotta originally intended, coupled with the changing trends in German filmmaking, enabled her, finally, to realise her film project. I also note that this was at the price of abandoning certain aspects of her original plans, and argue that, as *Rosenstraße* was substantially re-written after its original inception, the changes adopted for the final screenplay reflect the shifting desires and values in German society as much as they accommodate the changes in the German film industry.

won the UNICEF and SIGNIS awards at Venice. Katja Riemann was nominated in the Best Actress Category in the European Film Awards, and Producer Franz Rath was also nominated in the Camerimage awards.

¹³⁷ The specific texts, articles and web forums that have centred on the film are listed in the bibliography.

¹³⁸ Noack, F., 26 July 2004. FORUM: FILMREV Noack on *Rosenstrasse*: Margarethe von Trotta's Homage to Non-Political Antifascism. *H-German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=764> [Accessed 25 July 2005].

Unlike previous studies of the film, this chapter therefore examines the original scripts from April and December 1995.¹³⁹ This reveals the memory struggles behind the film, and the values of the cultural actors involved. It also points to issues around generational remembering. A desire to consider the German-Jewish relationship more empathetically is articulated through the thematisation of repressed memory and trauma. This also enabled von Trotta to take a critical look at post-war memory suppression, projecting criticism outwards towards the United States of America. Specifically, von Trotta takes issue with the way in which Holocaust survivors who emigrated to the United States were initially encouraged to forget their past and embrace their new American identity, a move which resulted not in forgetting, but the suppression of traumatic memories that would inevitably re-emerge later. Whilst she only directs her criticism towards America, she allows the theme of repressed memories to be appropriated in *Rosenstraße* as a vehicle for a German-Jewish unity through which past loss and suffering can be mourned and from which a future identity can be forged.

The film implies a causal link between Jewish and non-Jewish victimhood and suffering, offering the message that both Jewish and non-Jewish Germans may be seen as victims of the Third Reich, albeit differently. Von Trotta is careful, however, to emphasise that non-Jewish suffering can only ever be secondary, ensuring that the greater significance of the Holocaust remains central, underlining that the protest was but a small part of the wider narrative. Nevertheless, by presenting Jewish and non-Jewish Germans as victims, she is able to suggest that trauma can be worked through together, through understanding, recognition of a mutual enemy, and shared experience in the face of this mutual enemy. *Rosenstraße* evokes a sense of German-Jewish solidarity that represents an ideal.

In addition, von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* engages with memories of German resistance, which in the film, appears to have been widespread and to have taken multiple forms, the protest merely being the most significant. To an extent this can be seen as a nod to wider trends in resistance historiography, which in recent years have emphasised the

¹³⁹ The original scripts were kindly provided by Margarethe von Trotta to the author of this thesis.

role of the *Stille Helden*.¹⁴⁰ Resistance – whether Jewish or non-Jewish – in *Rosenstraße* is re-envisioned through Christian iconography and teachings. Von Trotta's depiction of resistance is problematic, not only in so far as it implies that opposition was widespread, but also because the film presents Nazism as an aberration, as a phenomenon that had been imposed on an unwilling nation, but will leave it tainted, long after the regime itself has been defeated.

Yet, for all the film's emphasis on resistance, von Trotta also allows the inference to be drawn that the central protagonist, Lena, frustrated by the protest's lack of impact, sacrificed herself to Goebbels so that the detainees would be released. The implication not only trivialises the protest, as Wolfgang Benz has suggested,¹⁴¹ but ultimately undermines one of the film's key messages, namely the importance of demonstrating civic courage. Lastly, *Rosenstraße* also addresses the subject of anti-Semitism and prejudice. Whilst the film suggests that virulent anti-Semitism belongs to Germany's past, it does not suggest either anti-Semitism or opposition to intermarriage has disappeared altogether in the present day. Yet it draws the conclusion that they can be overcome, and that this can happen precisely because of the legacy of the Holocaust. This invites the viewer to consider questions of identity. It suggests that a purist sense of national identity will always be flawed, and ought to be replaced by a conception of hybrid identity, one that transcends national, religious and ethnic boundaries, even whilst it encapsulates characteristics deemed to be in the German tradition. The protesters serve as the forebears for this model of identity. In *Rosenstraße* national identity is at once rejected as tainted, and simultaneously reclaimed in a new form, one that offers hope of German-Jewish unity. This hope for the future is expressed through the utopian potential of the child but the film's anti-racist stance may also unintentionally undermine the very idea von Trotta sought to promote.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Silent Heroes were recognised soon after the war, but subsequently forgotten in public discourses by the early 1950s. Memories of their actions have been revisited in recent years. For more detail on this see: Riffel, D., 2002. '„Unbesungene Helden“: Der Umgang mit „Rettung“ im Nachkriegsdeutschland'. In: B. Kosmala, and C. Schoppmann, eds. *Überleben im Untergrund: Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland 1941-1945*. Berlin: Metropol, pp. 317-335.

¹⁴¹ Benz, W., 2003. 'Kitsch, Klamotte und Klitterei. Die Legende von der Rosenstraße'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. 18 September, p. 13.

¹⁴² On the theme of the utopian potential of the child as a motif in von Trotta's work see: Homewood, C.J., 2008. *From Baader to Prada. The Representation of Urban Terrorism in German-Language Film*. Thesis (PhD). University of Leeds.

Chapter 6, entitled ‘Rosenstraße as a Monument: A Complex Site of German-Jewish Memory,’¹⁴³ examines the numerous forms through which the protest has been memorialised, primarily on the site itself.¹⁴⁴ In the last two decades Rosenstraße has become the location for two temporary exhibitions, unveiled in 1992 and 1993, Ingeborg Hunzinger’s sculpture ‘The Women’s Bloc’ (*Block der Frauen*, 1995), a commemorative plaque (1998), and an exhibition by Berlin’s Topography of Terror open-air museum (1999). Most recently the protest was also incorporated into the new exhibition at the Topography’s site in Niederkirchenerstraße (2010). The plurality of memorials to the protest, I argue in this chapter, reflects the protest’s increasing significance in the first two decades following unification.

This chapter focuses on the existing physical memorials identified above. I consider the function of memorials and sites of memory in anchoring events in the public imagination. This chapter analyses how individual memorials represent the protest, and also asks how they are to be read collectively, considering what impact they could have on public imagination. It considers the continuity between memorialisation in the late 1980s in the GDR and in post-Wall Berlin, as well as the way trends in memorialisation, most notably the emergence of citizens’ initiatives (in East and West), have both framed and facilitated the memorialisation of the Rosenstraße protest.

Yet, this memorialisation process has had to face difficulties and challenges, particularly in the early 1990s: though Ingeborg Hunzinger initiated the first permanent memorial project in 1988 with her memorial sculpture, its realisation was subject to many delays and struggles. Whilst the extent to which the protest has now been memorialised suggests growing willingness to include the National Socialist past in the national self-understanding, by looking at the process of memorialisation, as well as the actual memorials, it becomes possible to see the tensions inherent in realising such memorial projects.

¹⁴³ This is an extended and updated version of the chapter, which appears in B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany since 1945*. London: Palgrave, 2010.

¹⁴⁴ Ingeborg Hunzinger was the first to initiate memorialisation of the protest in 1988 with her sculpture *Block der Frauen*, although it took until the mid-1990s for it to be fully realised, an angle which this chapter explores.

In addition, I demonstrate that, visually and conceptually, these memorials differ greatly from one another: they offer multiple and conflicting interpretations.¹⁴⁵ However, for all of their differences, each evokes the key theme of German-Jewish solidarity, and I consider how this is represented. I argue that the quantity of memorialisation points not only to the prominence of the Nazi past in the cityscape but also to a willingness to keep that memory ever-present. The question remains, however, what exactly these memorials encourage us to remember. I suggest the memorialisation indicates a continuing ambiguity over what form memories of German-Jewish intermarriage and the Rosenstraße protest should take. Yet, as I argue, this ambiguity should be viewed positively, precisely because it generates reflection on the German-Jewish past, and on attendant questions of identity.¹⁴⁶

Given the wealth of memorialisation, and that for the most part its realisation has been framed by trends and discourses of the late 1980s and 1990s, this chapter asks, whether in light of the inclusion of the protest in the Topography of Terror's 2010 exhibition – just over a decade since the last memorial project was unveiled – we have begun to witness a paradigm shift, and what this may indicate about future memorialisation. This change would appear to have been affected by wider trends in remembering, and particularly the historiographical trends since 2004. This, I suggest, is reflected in the exhibition's shift in focus onto the detainees rather than the protesters, so that the actions of the latter do not overshadow the experiences of the former.

In drawing this chapter to a close, I consider the street itself as an authentic site of memory. Employing Andreas Huyssen's notion of the "urban palimpsest, a city-text to be read as a narrative"¹⁴⁷ I examine the multiple pasts that are reflected in the urban space and argue it reflects the competing tensions and interests in the struggle to determine Germany's historical memory, which latterly may point towards re-Prussianization.

¹⁴⁵ As Chapter 6 shows, the eventual installation of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture prompted the suggestion it should be complemented by an exhibition, so as to accompany, and help explain the events the sculpture depicted.

¹⁴⁶ Young, J.E., 2000. *At Memory's Edge. After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. Young argued that the best memorial to the Holocaust may in fact be debate about it.

¹⁴⁷ Huyssen, A., 1997. 'The Voids of Berlin'. *Critical Inquiry* 24, pp.57-81, here pp.59-60.

The thesis concludes by noting that memories of the Rosenstraße protest have developed significantly in the last two decades, and that this process was undoubtedly facilitated by, but not merely a consequence of the post-unification commitment to re-interpreting the Nazi past. It shows how memories of the protest have altered over time, in response to broader shifts and trends in remembering in the Berlin Republic, and suggests that a more differentiated understanding of this difficult past has become possible. I thus draw conclusions on the implications for wider debates in German memory politics and also make observations on interplay between media in cultural memory. I speculate that more recent developments point to a widening gulf in memories of the Rosenstraße protest and their implications for German self-understanding. Lastly I raise questions about future research, firstly in regard to the recent autobiographical memories of younger members of the first generation and secondly in relation to the use of social media both as a means of cultural memory construction and as a reflection of attitudes and values towards the Rosenstraße protest and the Nazi past in the early 2010s.

Chapter 2

‘Der eigentliche Streitwert’: Historical Debate and the Rosenstraße Protest¹⁴⁸

1.

In September 2003, historian Kurt Pätzold argued that the Rosenstraße debate had so far failed to discuss a key issue, namely the way in which historical understanding is produced and shaped by those involved in this process. This chapter therefore considers the debates between professional historians over the protest, and its dynamics. It places the Rosenstraße debates in the context of trends in resistance historiography, focusing in particular on the linkage between conceptions of resistance and identity. The way in which the historical debates are tied to the wider politics of remembering is demonstrated and how they are conditioned by historiographical trends and the moral as well as political dimension to writing about Nazism. Ian Kershaw has argued that German historians play an overtly political role, more so than historians in other countries, and that they perceive their task as that of “guardians or critics of the present” helping to shape public consciousness through their writings on the Nazi past.¹⁴⁹ There is evidence of this in this chapter. As a result, we can also identify an implicit correlation between patterns of historical research in Germany and conceptions of identity, of how Germans perceive themselves today in relation to, and on the basis of their history. This has been evident in many debates over the years, most notably the *Historikerstreit* of 1986-7, but is also apparent in the Rosenstraße debate.

As Chapter One has already made clear, whilst historians may make a significant contribution to historical understanding, historiography is but one facet of collective memory. Historical research and debate may provide a basis for these memories, but as the remaining chapters in this thesis also show, the different media interact with one another, helping to reinforce but also challenge the accounts of professional historians. First however, we need to understand the changing shape of historical debate over the Rosenstraße protest.

¹⁴⁸ This chapter title has been adapted from Kurt Pätzold’s 2003 article ‘Der eigentliche Streitwert. Zur Kontroverse um die Rosenstraße’. *Neues Deutschland*. 27 September, p.14.

¹⁴⁹ Kershaw I., 2000. *The Nazi Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. London: Arnold, p.2.

The Rosenstraße debates – in which professional historians have debated questions regarding the detention of intermarried German and so-called partial Jews in the former Jewish Community Building in Rosenstraße, and of the ensuing protest and its impact – have evolved into a struggle for influence over Germany’s historical memory between revisionist and critical historians, thus reflecting the competing, and opposing perspectives over what to remember, how and why. In order to fully comprehend the debates it is first necessary to examine the terminology used more closely. In what follows I focus specifically on the definitions of revisionism, revisionist historian, historicization, critical historian, and critical historiography that are employed throughout this thesis. I note that these have plural meanings. In order to avoid any confusion, however, I set out how the terms are used in relation to the historical debates over the Rosenstraße protest.

Let us begin with revisionism and revisionist historians. The term revisionism is multifaceted.¹⁵⁰ In the simplest sense it refers to the reinterpretation of an accepted, often well-established view of a historical event or period from a new perspective, be that social or theoretical, for example. In the context of contemporary Germany, it may also be associated with the concept of historicization, which I outline separately in this chapter. Revisionism in Germany, certainly as it is understood here in relation to the historical debates over the Rosenstraße protest, is intrinsically linked to the way in which the Nazi past is negotiated in the present. Historian Wolfgang Wippermann, for example, argues that the concept of historical revisionism is “aimed at reviving a positive historical consciousness which can underpin pride in German national identity.”¹⁵¹ That is not to say that it automatically displaces notions of guilt or responsibility for the past, but that it places emphasis on constructive, and affirmative examples of past action, attitudes, or individuals, as we see in the case of the Rosenstraße protest.

In addition, let us note that revisionism can also lend itself to the emergence of more complex readings of the past. Nathan Stoltzfus, for example, argues that it has

¹⁵⁰ Amongst the differing definitions, the term can also be used in a negative sense to describe attempts to distort or falsify the past. Whilst I recognise this negative definition, and that it has been used in relation to histories of the Holocaust, I note that it does not apply in relation to the arguments discussed in this thesis.

¹⁵¹ Wippermann, cited here in: Berger, S., 2000. ‘Nationalism and Historiography’. *German History*, 18(2), pp. 239-59, here p.256.

facilitated a broader understanding of the concept of resistance (*Widerstand*) from its narrow focus on clandestine resistance and attempted coup d'états, allowing for the emergence of scholarly studies on individual resisters, and on single-interest opposition, along with acts of non-compliance and dissent,¹⁵² thus paving the way for a more nuanced understanding of German society under National Socialism.

In this chapter, revisionism is understood as an approach to the past, which challenges existing historical understanding, principally by adopting a societal approach, focusing, in the historical interpretations analysed here, on the experiences of individuals, on social groups, and on everyday life, in order to question the limitations and contradictions between regime ideology, policy and their realisation. It also tends to emphasise positive actions and values, in line with Wolfgang Wippermann's aforementioned observation.

Given the above, I therefore identify revisionist historians, as those professional historians whose work seeks to revise understanding of the Nazi period, to raise questions about the nature and dynamics of state control, examining motivations and processes of decision-making, as well as the possibilities for opposition to it. I further add the caveat that although this chapter focuses on the debates between revisionist and critical historians, I do not wish to suggest the former are uncritical in their interpretations either of the events or of trends in historiography.¹⁵³ The revisionist historians, whose work is examined in this thesis, question the extent to which the Third Reich could be considered a total dictatorship, and to which it was forced to negotiate instead between its ideological aims and the changing social and political context of its twelve-year reign. Revisionist historians draw the conclusion that the potential for effective opposition did exist – especially within certain social groupings,

¹⁵² Stoltzfus, *Resistance of the Heart*, p.266.

¹⁵³ Nathan Stoltzfus for example is critical of society and the individual both in opposition and acquiescence to the regime. Whilst he praises the protesters in Rosenstraße, he also recognises that their motivations were entirely personal, developing incrementally over time, and neither opposed the regime nor its Jewish policies as a whole. Ibid., pp. 266-7. Similarly both Leugers and Leichenring turn attention to the role and impact on the regime, of the individual within the Catholic Church whilst also being critical of the Church's relationship with the regime. Leugers, A., 2005. 'Der Protest in der Rosenstraße und die Kirchen'. In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin, Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur. Neue Forschungen zum Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*. Annweiler: Plöger, pp. 47-80; Leichenring, J., 2005. 'Wurde der Protest in der Rosenstraße Ende Februar/Anfang März 1943 organisiert?' In: A. Leugers, ed. *Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur. Neue Forschungen zum Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*. Annweiler: Plöger pp.81-114.

primarily intermarried Germans – and that the regime could therefore have been forced to alter its policies. At the same time, they suggest the protest paradoxically also underlines Germans’ collective failure to oppose the regime, as a result of which it has been neglected.

Let us now turn our focus to the concept of historicization, which as with revisionism, is resistant to a single, simplified definition. Historicization has plural meanings and may mean different things in the context of other, albeit related debates. So what does historicization mean, and how is the term applied in this thesis? If we consider it in its most literal form the term refers to treating something as historical. According to Jane Caplan, historicization has its origins in the nineteenth century, and “calls on a deep sense of what ‘history’ means, morally as well as intellectually.”¹⁵⁴ In order to understand the concept of historicization in relation to Germany after 1945, however, requires a more detailed explanation that takes into account the ethical and politically fraught complexities associated with the term. Here Wulf Kansteiner’s 2006 study of historicization and its development, is particularly helpful. Exploring trends in historiography post-1945, Kansteiner illustrates how historians initially refused “to emplot Nazism as a period within German history”, before shifting to the position that it represented a specifically German manifestation of totalitarianism.¹⁵⁵ In both cases 1945 symbolised a demarcation, a caesura, separating the past from the present.¹⁵⁶ Following Kansteiner’s argument, historicization is understood as “the conceptualisation of historical continuities cutting across the era of Nazism and the post-war period within the one narrative universe, using compatible plot types.”¹⁵⁷

For the purposes of this thesis, historicization is therefore understood as the attempt to treat the period of the Third Reich as any other in history, thus shifting away from the idea of 1945 representing a caesura. In treating Nazism as any other period, rather than

¹⁵⁴ Caplan, J., 2008. *Nazi Germany; Short Oxford History of Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.9.

¹⁵⁵ Kansteiner, W., 2006 *In Pursuit of German Memory: History, Television and Politics after Auschwitz*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, pp. 91- 93.

¹⁵⁶ It was only in the late 1970s and 1980s that this finally began to shift, not least as a result of the Broszat-Friedländer dialogue as well as generational change. Broszat argued in favour of an exploration of the social history of Nazism that would allow for a greater understanding of the period and its on-going significance, but would locate it within its wider historical context. Friedländer, although not entirely opposed to historicization, voiced concerns that it would encourage apologetic tendencies, and defended the idea of the historical specificity of the Third Reich and the Final Solution.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.91.

one afforded a special status, a unique era, historicization seeks to highlight historical continuities and in so doing create a more positive sense of identity. By implication, however, this approach risks relativising National Socialism's crimes, and thus engenders morally and emotionally charged issues, particularly in relation to victimhood, which, as we see throughout this chapter, are integral to the disputes over the Rosenstraße protest.

Let us now turn our attention to critical historiography and critical historians. As with the terms already discussed in this chapter, there are multiple definitions, which may have different meanings in different contexts. Critical historiography can be understood as the study of the ambiguous relationship between the past and the act of writing about it, following in particular the theories proposed by Hayden White regarding narrative form and construction, as discussed in Chapter One. In addition, Canadian historian Lyle Dick, following Hegel, argues that it can be understood as a criticism of historical narratives in which their truth and credibility are examined, and which take into account both interpretations of the past as well as contemporary issues that influence our understanding of it.¹⁵⁸

I use the terms critical historiography and critical historian for want of more precise terms, in order to distinguish this group from their revisionist counterparts. As I discussed above, the designation of the term critical here, does not imply an absence of critical thought from proponents of revisionist history, but that their respective interpretative positions contrast starkly. Critical historiography in this chapter, unlike revisionism, treats the Nazi past as different, unique and indicates that the centrality of the Holocaust, and lack of German opposition to it, should remain paramount in our recollections of that period. It charts a space to challenge accepted interpretations, in a similarity with revisionism, without however, advocating a historicization of the Third Reich.

The term critical historian is therefore used to denote the professional historians whose work indicates a desire to investigate the events in order to de-mythologise them. Historians in this category tend to question how the events fitted into the wider context

¹⁵⁸ Dick, L., 2013. *Fragmentation and Synthesis from the Standpoint of Critical History*. Available from: <http://activehistory.ca/papers/ldick/> [Accessed 3 March 2014].

of Nazi persecution and its ideological aims. Their research calls into question certain assumptions about the protest and its impact, its form and duration, and includes a reconsideration of the regime's intentions but also challenges prevailing understanding of societal tendencies, particularly on the issue of divorce amongst intermarried couples, the gender balance of the applicants, and points at which divorce levels peaked. The historians in this category attempt to strike a balance between remembering resistance and remembering complicity in order that neither the opponents, nor the regime's victims, are sidelined, and the extent and efficacy of resistance, is not exaggerated. They also tend to question the way in which and why narratives have been constructed, and the implications of this on contemporary understanding of the past.¹⁵⁹

The first section of this chapter identifies the key historiographical trends and approaches that frame the debates. I argue that they have been shaped by issues of remembering from the mid-1980s onwards, in spite of the fact that the protest only came to prominence after 1990, and first became a source of heated public debate in 2003. There is an understandable tendency to see that year as the starting point to this debate. Yet, I show that by then debates between historians had already been going on for some time, and therefore argue that we need to look back at their origins in order to understand their dynamics. I suggest there are two phases. The first concentrates on the 1990s, peaking in the middle of the decade, whilst the second phase begins in late 2002, peaking in late 2003. Examining the debate in this way shows when and why the protest came to the fore, emphasising how it relates and also contributes to identity discourses. I argue that understanding the first phase of the debate is essential to understanding the second phase. Key themes and divisions that were subsequently elaborated on and perpetuated in public debate were already foregrounded at this stage. Focusing on this first phase illustrates how politics and trends in remembering in early post-unification Germany intersected in histories of the Rosenstraße protest, which were shaped by the competing interests, influences and approaches of the historians involved. This indicates continuity with the historical traditions and divisions of the FRG that manifested themselves in the Historians' Dispute, and the resistance debate.

¹⁵⁹ This is evident in particular in Gruner's analysis of the construction of the Rosenstraße narrative, which he traces from the 1945 article written by Georg Zivier. See his: *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße*, pp. 18-29.

In keeping with the theoretical framework underpinning this thesis, I suggest that dominant memories are forged through and emerge during the course of struggles between competing versions of events, but remain open to contestation. In order to understand these struggles, and their implications, it is also necessary to understand how they have been framed, and by whom. As we shall see, the first phase of the Rosenstraße debate is relatively small, mainly taking place in academic journals, and to a far lesser extent in the German press.¹⁶⁰ The timing, however, is significant, beginning at a point in which memories of resistance were prominent in public consciousness as a result of the resistance debates of the early 1990s, the 50th anniversary of the 20th July Plot, as well as the release of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*. As we saw in Chapter One, debates on resistance in the Third Reich, and specifically the integration of the GDR's resistance heritage into unified Germany's resistance tradition, had resulted in a new consensus on the breadth and variety of opposition to Nazism. Yet, academic engagement with the protest brought the very issues and approaches into question that only a short while before had been established. Seen from this perspective, it is unsurprising that they were strongly refuted. The intensity of this initial phase of debate, I argue, reflects the sensitivity of the subject of resistance at this time, showing the fragility of the new consensus, but also its resilience, and the commitment to inclusivity. Analysis of this first phase demonstrates the willingness to engage not only with the events, but to do so critically.

As becomes apparent in this chapter, up until the mid-1990s, there existed a consensus of opinion over the events in Rosenstraße, namely that the protest had successfully secured the release of the detainees. With the introduction in 1996 of a counter-argument, suggesting the regime had other plans for the detainees, the historical debate took a new turn, polarising opinion and entrenching divisions between revisionist and critical historians. Arguably this shift in interpretation facilitated open discussion, but it has also been employed to suggest that there exists an unwillingness to accept the idea of a successful protest, even that it constitutes a taboo. However, the first phase of debate and subsequent interpretative shift were less an attempt to dismiss the events

¹⁶⁰ Notably the press had already begun to demonstrate an interest in the events, albeit largely in relation to their commemoration rather than historical research, which appeared largely uncontested.

than one to engage critically with the protest, without either forgetting the reason for it, or over-inflating its significance for the sake of a positive collective identity.

Debate waned in the latter half of the 1990s, until late 2002, when the protest began to re-emerge, following the publication of Wolf Gruner's research findings. Whilst these generated some interest, it took until autumn 2003 for the second phase of the debate to get underway fully. Unlike the first phase, the second was far more extensive, involving historians, journalists, filmmakers, and eyewitnesses; it was conducted in the German press, online, as well as in the pages of academic journals and scholarly monographs. This part of the chapter shows how the Rosenstraße narrative subsequently took on a renewed significance in the light of the burgeoning discourses of victimhood and suffering, and in response to the protest's increasing representation in other media. At their core, however, debates about the Rosenstraße protest remain a struggle between competing and conflicting interpretations of the protest, and the implications of each for contemporary understanding of the past. In the light of the new openness towards victimological discourses around the turn of the millennium, in which Germans were re-imagined as victims of Nazism, accounts of the Rosenstraße protest, which emphasised the heroic suffering of the non-Jewish German protesters, became potentially problematic. The intense and at times bitter debate reflected the ethical dimensions of remembering. Initially it seemed as though advocates of historicization had gained the upper hand, and the desire for the Nazi past to be treated as any other period in Germany's history, remained strong. However, the critical approach has gained considerably in influence in the longer term. I argue that this second phase therefore reflects a shift in attitudes surrounding the Nazi past, and indicates a growing rejection of this historicization, in favour of a critical approach to history and German self-understanding.

i) Contextualising the Emergence of the Rosenstraße Protest in Historical Discourses

Chapter 1 of this thesis outlined the shift in historiography that facilitated the Rosenstraße protest's emergence as part of the broader investigation of resistance and opposition during the Third Reich. Both Heiko Roskamp and Wolfgang Benz's works placed the protest within the context of persecution and resistance, focusing on

everyday and underground opposition, in line with the broader historiographical trend towards inclusivity, as well as investigations into the German-Jewish past in the early 1980s.¹⁶¹ The protest provided an example of solidarity, but, when placed within this broader context, its significance was seen as relative to the on-going struggle for survival, and the wider lack of opposition to Jewish persecution. Interest in integrating the protest into West Germany's resistance tradition is also reflected in American historian Nathan Stoltzfus' article in *Die Zeit* in 1989.¹⁶² Timed to coincide with the 45th anniversary of the 20th July Plot, this drew attention to the subject and also pointed to the breadth and diversity of resistance. At this point it is also possible to see a general consensus of opinion on the events, namely that the protest successfully forced the regime to concede. This interest continued into the 1990s, as we see with the popular histories and also in the German press. Certainly it seemed as if the latter sought to draw attention to the events as part of the wider picture of opposition in the Third Reich, particularly as the resistance debate was gathering pace.

The 50th anniversary of the protest in 1993 generated interest from sections of the press, mostly left and liberal newspapers. Again in the following year the press continued to show an interest, aligning it with other acts of individual resistance by Oskar Schindler and by Otto Weidt, in order to show that resistance was more diverse than the 20th July Plot suggested.¹⁶³ Here the emphasis was placed on remembering the protest and learning from it, rather than criticising historians for the lack of research into the events, as was subsequently suggested. Notably, the press only first criticised historians, implying there existed an unwillingness to engage with the Rosenstraße protest, in late 1995.¹⁶⁴ The press and popular histories did, however, draw attention to the need for further historical research, one which historians subsequently attempted to fulfil.

¹⁶¹ Roskamp, H., 1984. *Tiergarten 1933-1945: Verfolgung und Widerstand in einem Berliner Innenstadtbezirk*. Berlin: Werner J Schneider; Benz, W., ed., 1988. *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933-1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft*. Munich: Verlag C.H.Beck.

¹⁶² Stoltzfus, N., 1989. 'Jemand war für mich da. Der Aufstand der Frauen in der Rosenstraße', *Die Zeit* 30, 20-21 July, pp.9-12.

¹⁶³ See Appendix 1.3 for a breakdown of the newspapers focusing on the protest in the early 1990s. On the expansion of the resistance narrative to include examples such as Rosenstraße, Oskar Schindler and Otto Weidt see also: Anon, 'Sie schrien nach ihren Männern. Wie Juden mit List und Zivilcourage vor dem Holocaust gerettet wurden', *Der Spiegel* 8, 1 March 1994, pp.178-183.

¹⁶⁴ Gaserow, V., 1995. 'Frauen mit Courage; Protestaktion gegen Judendeportation wird endlich gewürdigt'. *Die Zeit*, 13 October, p. 18.

The protest's emergence initially raised little if any controversy. This certainly seems to suggest that in the context of the early 1990s, there was an openness towards embracing the events, and secondly that the narrative was broadly appealing, providing an example of the possibilities of opposition, whilst also demonstrating the existence of 'good Germans' who embodied the idea of philo-Semitism. Seen from this perspective, the narrative lent itself to historicization, as discussed earlier in this chapter, in so far as it offered a positive example of behaviour during the Third Reich on which Germans in the present could draw, suggesting an affirmative, and constructive continuity with the past. It could be used to demonstrate the existence of German-Jewish solidarity, but also to counter, or offset accusations of inaction against the regime and its Jewish policy on the part of the German public. At the same time it offered messages of racial tolerance and loyalty that were particularly pertinent at the beginning of the 1990s, with national tensions heightened following political unification and fears over resurgent nationalism, as well as a subsequent rise in race related crimes.

Yet, the Rosenstraße protest also appealed to advocates of a critical history precisely because it could be used to reinforce the concept of inclusivity, in so far as it helped to show the diversity of the forms, and the extent of resistance. At this point Germany was engaged in a debate over how to integrate the different resistance heritages of East and West into one tradition. In the mid-1990s, following the resistance debate, the Rosenstraße protest became a contested narrative. Its possible meaning altered, and its implications for identity took on a new significance. Unlike the resistance debate that preceded it, the debates over Rosenstraße were centred, however, on the question of how, not whether, the protest should be integrated into unified Germany's resistance heritage.

ii) A Burgeoning Dispute: The Exchange between Nathan Stoltzfus and Christoph Dipper

By the mid-1990s, as we have seen, interest in the protest had already begun to increase. The historical dialogue that took place from 1995-1996 between Nathan Stoltzfus and Christoph Dipper was therefore timely, and constituted the most in-depth

discussion of the events and their contemporary relevance up to that point in time.¹⁶⁵ Both Stoltzfus' research and Dipper's reply effectively upheld the dominant interpretation of the protest and its reputed success, but, in the wake of the recent resistance debate, raised problematic issues and had significant implications for understanding of the events, and for German self-understanding. It became clear that although there was openness towards investigating the Rosenstraße protest further, to do so any future historical debate needed to move beyond its existing parameters. Yet, as debate has subsequently intensified, this early period has been neglected, dismissed, or taken as an indication of the above-mentioned taboo.¹⁶⁶ This however, constitutes a fundamental misunderstanding of the debate at this stage, and its wider relevance.

Why did the protest become controversial where it had previously been accepted? We need to bear in mind that historical perspectives are not fixed, but they are in flux. Shifts in patterns of remembering have an impact upon an event's historical significance and possible meanings. Although in the 1980s the protest appeared as merely one facet of a much broader picture of life during the Third Reich, the post-unification reconfiguration of memories of the Nazi past gave the protest a different nuance, rendering it more significant in the longer term. We have already seen the broader implications of this in the resistance debate and the new consensus in approaches to understanding resistance that resulted from it. But as Bill Niven also points out, the resistance debate had generated the awareness that Germany's two different traditions "somehow, ultimately, had to be welded".¹⁶⁷ Arguably, it was newer narratives including Rosenstraße, Oskar Schindler, Otto Weidt, and the Silent Heroes that offered that possibility. As relatively 'new' narratives, certainly ones that had not been prominent during the Cold War, they could be seen to be distanced from the former politics of remembering that was bound to each state and their respective ideology, and could therefore more broadly appeal to Germans on either side of the former divide. Yet the Rosenstraße narrative was now problematic, not, as has been suggested because it demonstrated that resistance was possible or that the regime had been forced to concede, but rather as a result of its implications for identity

¹⁶⁵ Stoltzfus, N., 1995. 'Widerstand des Herzens. Der Protest und die deutsch-jüdische Mischehe'. *Geschichte & Gesellschaft* 21, pp. 218-247; Dipper, C., 1996 'Schwierigkeiten mit der Resistenz'. *Geschichte & Gesellschaft* 22, pp.409-416.

¹⁶⁶ Stoltzfus, N., 2000. 'Third Reich History as if the People Mattered. Eine Entgegnung auf Christoph Dipper'. *Geschichte & Gesellschaft* 26, pp.672-684.

¹⁶⁷ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.83.

construction. At this stage division in the historical debate emerged, positioning advocates of a historicization over supporters of a critical history of the events.

In his 1995 article for *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, Nathan Stoltzfus set out a complex analysis of the Rosenstraße protest, drawing new conclusions about the efficacy of the protest, and the opportunities for effective opposition during the Third Reich. Moreover, he suggested that the implications of this interpretation for matters of identity had hitherto prevented the protest's recognition and integration into collective memory. He argued that the protest in Rosenstraße showed how the Holocaust could have either been slowed or stopped had more Germans intervened. On this basis he called for a renewed examination of resistance, in which resistance (*Widerstand*) was contrasted with the concept of *Resistenz*.¹⁶⁸

These two concepts differ from one another significantly. Even though the concept of what resistance (*Widerstand*) constitutes is widely contested, broadly speaking it is understood to mean direct opposition to the existing state and its ideology, whereas *Resistenz* refers to opposition or dissent within the existing society towards specific aspects of that society. Whilst resistance therefore tends to focus on challenging order at the highest level, *Resistenz* focuses on the everyday. Charles S. Maier argues *Resistenz* was “intended to describe a mixture of acceptance and rejection below the threshold of outright opposition.”¹⁶⁹ Examples of resistance include an attempted assassination or *coup d'état*, as demonstrated by individuals such as Georg Elser, and groups such as the 20th July Plot, planning for the moment of the regime's demise, such as with the Kreisauer Kreis, through to the distribution of pamphlets publicly opposing the regime and calling for its overthrow, as demonstrated by the White Rose and Herbert Baum groups, and by helping regime opponents to survive as with the numerous Silent Heroes. By contrast examples of *Resistenz* include anything from regular church attendance, sarcasm directly against a local Nazi functionary, as Maier suggests, through to protesting against specific, individual policies.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, Maier suggests, *Resistenz* proved an effective means of opposition because the regime tended

¹⁶⁸ The concept of *Resistenz* was established by historian Martin Broszat during the Bavaria Project.

¹⁶⁹ Maier, C.S., 1998. *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity*. 1st ed. Harvard: Harvard University Press, here p.83.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

to back away from power confrontations, as their reluctance towards confrontation with the church, for example, demonstrated.¹⁷¹

Stoltzfus suggested that *Resistenz* had proven more effective than resistance, and therefore argued its recognition should be weighted accordingly.¹⁷² He, in effect, made a case for prioritising memories of the Rosenstraße protest over the key resistance traditions of the 20th July Plot, and the White Rose. This alone made Stoltzfus' article contentious. However, it also raised a number of other problematic issues. Given the intensity surrounding discourses of resistance in Germany at the time, the article showed surprisingly little, if any awareness of the changing attitudes towards resistance and the debate that had preoccupied historians, politicians and journalists in the preceding years. Instead Stoltzfus criticised understanding of resistance, arguing its focus was too narrow, taking issue specifically with the West German resistance traditions of the Stauffenberg Plot and the White Rose, whilst ignoring the attempts to broaden the scope of resistance.¹⁷³ Failing to take into account the changes in resistance historiography and approaches meant Stoltzfus' interpretation appeared somewhat outdated, seeking to hark back to earlier patterns in which one act of opposition offset another in some sort of one-upmanship.

Whilst the approach Stoltzfus had adopted had existed before and indeed during the resistance debate, it had however been largely discredited by it. Yet, it is likely that it still had a broad appeal, in spite of the new consensus, a factor that renders the subsequent criticism of Stoltzfus' approach more understandable. Hans Mommsen had argued only the year before against a reduction of resistance to any sort of biographical and moralistic apologia.¹⁷⁴ Yet, Stoltzfus' article endorsed that very approach, contrasting the protest with the resistance of the 20th July Plot and of the White Rose group. He lamented how, in stark contrast to these celebrated resisters, the protesters had been opposed to the regime from the outset but their actions never recognised. He

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.94. Maier cited the examples of the Crucifix Decree and the halting of the Euthanasia program. Stoltzfus uses the same examples in his own research support of his own hypotheses.

¹⁷² Stoltzfus, 'Widerstand des Herzens', pp. 218-247.

¹⁷³ Ibid., pp.234-235. Stoltzfus' understanding of resistance appears to be based on the West German model to the exclusion of East German resistance narratives. He recognises that resistance historiography shifted in the late 1970s away from a focus on elite resistance and towards resistance within society. However, he makes no reference to more recent shifts following unification and the resistance debate.

¹⁷⁴ Mommsen, H cited in Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.82.

presented the protesters as the 'better Germans', who unlike other resisters had never been complicit with the regime and its atrocities.¹⁷⁵ The inference was that the protesters were innocent whereas Stauffenberg and his co-conspirators were not.

In addition, he suggested that these resisters had been recognised by professional historians, politicians and the general public in spite of their failings, whereas the protesters had been neglected precisely because of their success. This, according to Stoltzfus, resulted from the politics of identity, explaining that the Rosenstraße protest had not been publicly remembered either in the period following the war, or even in more recent times, because it undermined the foundations upon which German self-understanding was based. Stoltzfus' argument stated that Germany's resistance heritage was determined by the view that Germans could not successfully defeat the regime, and an identity constructed accordingly; to contradict it would fundamentally shift the basis of that self-understanding, and historians, he argued, were reluctant to do this for that very reason.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, the Rosenstraße protest, he suggested, necessitated a re-evaluation of resistance, which should be premised on the issue of efficacy. It was necessary, in his view, to pit the merits of resistance against those of *Resistenz* in effectively opposing the regime.¹⁷⁷ Yet, it seemed less as if this was an argument in favour of broadening the resistance heritage, than one that would simply result in the displacement of the one narrative by another, effectively taking resistance discourses a step back to the epistemological divisions that had existed prior to the resistance debate. Stoltzfus proposed opposing Rosenstraße and the 20th July Plot in much the same way as conservative and communist resistance had been contrasted with each other during the resistance debate, and which had proven itself to be as ineffective as it was divisive.

Stoltzfus' claim that a re-examination of resistance was necessary was made even more contentious through his claim that the protest in Rosenstraße proved that the Holocaust could have either been slowed if not stopped had more German civilians publicly opposed the regime and demonstrated solidarity with their Jewish neighbours.¹⁷⁸ This

¹⁷⁵ Stoltzfus, 'Widerstand des Herzens', pp. 241-2.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p.234.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., pp.236-247.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p.232. There are comparisons here with Daniel J. Goldhagen's analogy. Whilst Stoltzfus argues civilians could have acted to stop the Holocaust, but ultimately facilitated it through their own failings, Goldhagen's thesis holds that it was public support, i.e. lack of dissent against the regime, enabled the regime to carry out the Holocaust. By implication both suggest civilian opposition would have been key,

argument was premised on the view that in order to meet its racial aims, the Nazi regime required both social stability and secrecy around the specific details of the Holocaust. By publicly opposing the regime, both stability and secrecy were threatened, and the regime would be more inclined to capitulate. To support his hypothesis, Stoltzfus cited multiple instances in which public defiance is deemed to have succeeded. These included Bishop Galen's opposition to the Euthanasia policy, and opposition to the Crucifix decree, but also extended to examples outside of Nazi Germany including the mass protests between communists and socialists in the Weimar Republic, mass female protest against the First World War and public protest for women's right to vote. Such an understanding, Stoltzfus argued again, had hitherto been blocked because of its implications for identity.¹⁷⁹

Yet, this interpretation was potentially problematic in so far as de-contextualising public opposition in the way Stoltzfus had not only failed to take into account the complex circumstances of each case, but also promoted a model of identity in which defiance of authority was seen as a defining and enduring characteristic, which preceded but also outlasted the Third Reich. Rendering opposition more normal could make it more identifiable with, but it also facilitated a focus on opposition that seemed to suggest that Germans could have resisted, and they may now lament their lack of opposition. Thus, the focus remains primarily on the German perspective, and begins to point towards an interpretation in which the failure to resist is seen as a tragedy for Germans, who ought now to recognise but also mourn their lack of opposition, which they now understood to have been possible in spite of subsequent claims to the contrary. Stoltzfus laments this belated recognition, arguing that it had been blocked for so long by the focus on West Germany's resistance tradition, and its equation of resistance, failure and martyrdom.

The ways in which shifts in patterns of remembering had begun to intersect in the historical accounts of the protest manifested themselves in the following edition of *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* in Christoph Dipper's response to Stoltzfus' interpretation.

and that whilst Stoltzfus' argument infers Germans didn't consider opposition possible, Goldhagen's implies that this reflected an inherent anti-Semitism in German society.

¹⁷⁹ Such a suggestion was not entirely new, rather a variation of British historian J.P. Stern's suggestion in the late 1970s, which related to the influence of the Church. Stern, J.P. 1978. *Hitler, der Führer und das Volk*. Munich: DTV, p.111 cited here in Stoltzfus, 'Widerstand des Herzens', p. 232 and pp. 238-241.

Dipper had, during the resistance debate, been a strong advocate of Peter Steinbach's integrative concept.¹⁸⁰ According to Bill Niven the term refers "to the inclusion of all individuals, groups, organizations and institutions from which resistance emerged", even where this cast them in a critical light.¹⁸¹ This stance was evident here in the tenor and content of Dipper's counterarguments. Although he agreed that Rosenstraße constituted the only protest in Germany against the Holocaust, he criticised that Stoltzfus had failed to fulfil the criteria of his task, namely examining motivation and scope for action and giving an explanation for the events, and that he chose instead to lament how little German civilians had tested the regime, whilst simultaneously complaining at the decline of moral standards.¹⁸²

Dipper suggested that Stoltzfus' article offered no new insights in so far as his interpretation of the protest as successful reinforced existing understanding.¹⁸³ Moreover, he suggested Stoltzfus' interpretations were problematic.¹⁸⁴ Here we can see the impact of the changing trends and the politics of resistance historiography in the mid-1990s, and how these have helped to shape the debate. For Dipper two key issues presented themselves, namely Stoltzfus' claims that the Holocaust could have been slowed or stopped, and that it was necessary to re-examine and re-define resistance. As we consider Dipper's response, we need to consider the reasons for it, as well as its implications. Given the broader context of the mid-1990s, and the struggle for influence over Germany's historical memory, the tenor of Dipper's response appears to be tempered by the fact that attempts at historicizing the Nazi past, were not only prevalent, but also very appealing. To leave Stoltzfus' claims unopposed would be tantamount to legitimising them. This would have the effect of undermining the aforementioned integrative concept, which had been a factor in the recent resistance debate, and also the new consensus on resistance that had emerged as a result of the debate. Dipper's responses indicate the reluctance of some professional historians to

¹⁸⁰ Historian Peter Steinbach was in charge of the project instigated by Richard von Weizsäcker, as discussed in Chapter One, to recognise the breadth and diversity of resistance to Nazism, including Communist resistance incorporating it into the exhibition at Berlin's *Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand* (Memorial to German Resistance).

¹⁸¹ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.75.

¹⁸² Dipper, 1996. 'Schwierigkeiten mit der Resistenz', pp. 409-416.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p.409.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

accept such narratives, particularly given the emphasis on German crimes and the Holocaust in other public discourses in the mid-1990s.

Dipper took issue with Stoltzfus' historicization of the protest, which, removed it from its wider and complex context, along with his assessment of the regime's relative stability and concomitant susceptibility to public influence – which, Dipper suggested, had been based on generalisations and causal linkage between a variety of acts of opposition that were arbitrarily grouped together. He sought to highlight the problems of method in such an interpretation, claiming it obscured a deeper understanding of the events.¹⁸⁵ Accordingly, Dipper suggests it was only when the examples Stoltzfus cited were de-contextualised that they appeared to support the argument that the regime could have been forced to modify or cease its racial policy, ergo could be taken as evidence that Germans could have, but failed to stop the Holocaust. On this he concluded Stoltzfus' arguments did not hold up to scrutiny.

Although the resistance debate had declined at this point, this does not suggest it had been entirely concluded or that its outcomes were fixed and unchangeable. It does, however, indicate the importance of the resistance heritage in relation to identity. There may have been an understandable reluctance to re-ignite the resistance debate, only to re-cover old arguments and risk losing hard won battles over approaches to understanding and assessing resistance, which can help to explain the tenor of Dipper's response. However, this was no attempt to dismiss the protest, nor was it an indicator of an unwillingness to integrate the Rosenstraße protest into the resistance heritage. On the contrary, although Dipper had suggested, somewhat inaccurately, that the protest had long been researched on the one hand, he argued on the other that there was a need to establish why the protest developed and why it succeeded.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, he argued these investigations should focus on the influence of industrialists and artistic circles, and also consider whether Berlin and the events that happened there were treated as special cases that differed from other parts of Germany because of the capital's

¹⁸⁵ Dipper agreed, for example, that the regime was dependent on public morale and consensus, but suggests Stoltzfus drew too sweeping a conclusion from it. He argued that the regime had already established a policy of social marginalisation and adopted bureaucratic-political norms so that the Holocaust was veiled in secrecy and therefore not dependent on the mass loyalty, which Stoltzfus suggests was instrumental in forcing the regime to give in to the protesters' demands. Dipper, 'Schwierigkeiten mit der Resistenz', pp.410-413.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p.409.

visibility to the world's media. Following these questions, he indicated, could yield answers to questions of motivation and scope for action, and provide an explanation for the events.

Again, this shows the impact of the resistance debate on shaping historical narratives of the Rosenstraße protest.¹⁸⁷ Whilst Dipper welcomed further research, he argued against re-igniting the resistance debate specifically on the basis of Stoltzfus' hypothesis, which he suggested was less about theoretical typologies – as Stoltzfus had inferred – and more about making moral and political value judgements that supported the view that because Rosenstraße was moral, courageous, limited in its scope and successful, it warranted more recognition than the failed resistance of either 20th July Plot or the White Rose.¹⁸⁸ This was problematic because it suggested that the protest was both an act of political resistance and life-threatening civilian unrest. It implied that rather than being a consequence of despair and desperation, the protest resulted from a committed and political choice on the part of the protesters to oppose the regime. Such an interpretation, however, idealised the protesters and their actions. This indicated to Dipper that debate would effectively take a step backwards to the unhelpful divisions over who had the 'right' or better resistance and would downplay attempts to remember critically.

Although Stoltzfus' claim that what constituted resistance needed to be reconsidered was refuted, and indeed no new resistance debate ensued from Stoltzfus and Dipper's exchange, it has had further implications for the shape of the debate. It has also given rise to the suggestion that there exists a taboo around Rosenstraße, and this results from the fixed views on resistance and its implications for contemporary German identity.¹⁸⁹ The taboo theme, as we see, recurs repeatedly later on in this debate, and to an extent also obscures the details of this first phase of debate. The very premise that professional German historians have been unwilling to engage with the Rosenstraße protest has been disproved in this examination of the first phase of debate. It has shown instead a

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p.412.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p.414-416.

¹⁸⁹ See for example Stoltzfus, N., 1998. 'Protest and Silence: Resistance Histories in Post-War Germany: the Missing Case of Intermarried Germans'. In: R. Rohrich, ed. *Resisting the Holocaust*. Oxford and New York; Berg, pp. 151-178.

willingness to integrate the protest into Germany's resistance heritage, but that this is divided and also determined by the struggle for influence over historical memory, and the implications of historical memory for conceptions of German national identity.

Stoltzfus' interpretation suggests that by continuing to align resistance with failure, Germans are able to avoid acknowledging the lack of opposition to Nazism, but are also denied the possibility of a positive sense of identity. Yet, focusing both on what could have been possible, and on examples of German mass protest across different eras allows for a positive German identity in the present based on de-contextualised and idealised characteristics that both precede and outlast the era of the Third Reich. Dipper, by contrast, demonstrates the reluctance to embrace an idealised and moralising interpretation of the event that would foster a sense of self that prioritised any instance of German heroism that detracted from the uniqueness of the Holocaust and from German guilt, particularly at a time when critical awareness of German complicity with the regime and its atrocities was becoming increasingly prominent in memory discourses. Stoltzfus' criticisms were problematic because of their implications, and their potential to undermine the 'new consensus' by pitting one act of resistance against another. The fact that neither Stoltzfus' article, nor Dipper's rebuttal succeeded in igniting a new debate, suggests that the new consensus was in fact relatively robust.

Although Christoph Dipper plays no further part in the Rosenstraße debate beyond this point, his role was essential in forging its dynamics. Arguably, however, by early 1996, the debate had reached an impasse – it appeared it could go no further whilst the parameters of debate were determined by arguments about the typologies of, and approaches to resistance. Both sides appeared to agree this successful protest was worthy of recognition, but disagreed over how it should be remembered. This impasse was overcome by the new turn in research, however, which followed shortly after the Stoltzfus – Dipper exchange, and placed the question of the protest's success under scrutiny for the first time. This shift would further consolidate the dynamics of the debate. But revisionist historians wrongly associated the desire for a critical version of the events with a rejection of the idea of a successful protest – as if the two had become mutually exclusive. This misunderstanding has subsequently been perpetuated throughout the debate. It has led – intentionally or otherwise – to a misunderstanding of

Dipper's criticisms, and of a critical reading of the Rosenstraße protest and its implications.

iii) From the mid-1990s to 'Fakten und Fiktionen'

In the years that followed the Stoltzfus – Dipper exchange, developments in historical research continued. To an extent they followed Dipper's suggestions that the role of industrialists be considered along with a comparison between the situation in Berlin at the time of the Factory Action and protest elsewhere in Germany.¹⁹⁰ Research in the mid to late 1990s also demonstrated some continuity with earlier representations of the protest in so far as it was again examined within the context of Jewish persecution and underground resistance.¹⁹¹

It was Wolf Gruner's research, which in 1996 initiated the above-mentioned turning point in perceptions of the protest, by placing the events in the context of the regime's racial policy and use of forced labour.¹⁹² Gruner was able to offer a viable alternative to the hitherto dominant reading of the protest as a success. Notably, it took some time for Gruner's research to become part of public discourse. In the main, responses to his hypothesis were restricted for a number of years to comments in journal articles and essays.¹⁹³ This had the effect that when the public debate was finally ignited, Gruner's hypothesis appeared a reactionary response to the narrative's surge in popularity. This

¹⁹⁰ Both criteria have been addressed by Wolf Gruner. See: Gruner, W., 2002. 'Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Ereignisse in der Berliner Rosenstraße Fakten und Fiktionen um den 27. Februar 1943'. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 11, pp.137-177; Gruner, W., 2005. *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße. Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Verfolgung der Mischehen 1943*. Frankfurt. a. M: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag; Kingreen, M., 2002. 'Verfolgung und Rettung in Frankfurt am Main und der Rhein-Main-Region'. In: B. Kosmala, and C. Schoppmann, eds. *Überleben im Untergrund: Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland 1941-1945*. Berlin: Metropol, pp. 167-190.

¹⁹¹ In particular this shows continuity with Heiko Roskamp and Wolfgang Benz's summarisation of the protest in the 1980s.

¹⁹² Gruner, W., 1996. *Judenverfolgung in Berlin 1933-1945 Eine Chronologie der Behördenmaßnahmen in der Reichshauptstadt*. Berlin: Edition Hentrich; Gruner, W., 1997. *Der Geschlossene Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Juden: zur Zwangsarbeit als Element der Verfolgung 1938-1943*. Berlin: Metropol. Given that Gruner's research focused on Jewish persecution and the use of forced labour, the protest in Rosenstraße was only a minor feature at this point. But he later developed his arguments in more detail. See Gruner, W., 2002. 'Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Ereignisse in der Berliner Rosenstraße. Fakten und Fiktionen um den 27. Februar 1943'. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 11, pp.137-177.

¹⁹³ Stoltzfus, N., 2001. 'The Limits of Policy Social Protection of Intermarried German Jews in Nazi Germany'. In: R. Gellately and N. Stoltzfus, eds. *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*. Oxford and Princeton; Princeton UP, pp. 117-144; Stoltzfus, N., 2003. 'Der Versuch, in der Wahrheit zu leben und die Rettung von jüdischen Angehörigen durch deutsche Frauen im Dritten Reich'. In: J., Leichsenring, ed. *Frauen und Widerstand*. Münster: Lit, pp. 64-95.

allowed revisionist historians to suggest it was in fact their interpretations that were groundbreaking, and provided Germans' insights into the Nazi past that had been previously denied. Moreover, this stance also implied that in questioning the protest's success, historians such as Gruner, along with Wolfgang Benz and Beate Meyer by association, sought to keep these supposedly groundbreaking insights from Germans still, when in fact this was far from the case. For Gruner, arguing that the protesters had indeed been courageous but that they had not forced the regime to concede, removed the emphasis on heroism and triumphalism that had begun to prove problematic, whilst enabling a more complex and questioning interpretation of the events.

In the intervening years research into the events continued, but any discussion remained limited to relatively few professional historians. Between December 2002 and March 2003, however, the Rosenstraße protest began to re-emerge as a topic of interest, garnering attention in the press, following the publication of an article by Wolf Gruner discussing the facts and fictions of the Factory Action and Rosenstraße protest.¹⁹⁴ Opinions on this research were not simply split along left-right lines. A survey of the relevant newspaper articles reveals that this interest was shown primarily in the left wing and liberal press, with a lesser degree of interest in centrist and conservative dailies.¹⁹⁵ The centrist *Der Tagesspiegel*, left wing *Junge Welt* and *Die Tageszeitung (taz)* continued to demonstrate support for interpretations of the protest as a successful act of resistance. *Der Spiegel*, and *Berliner Zeitung*, along with centrist daily *Berliner Morgenpost* and conservative daily *Die Welt* indicated support for Gruner's research, whilst left-wing weekly *Freitag* welcomed the opportunity for a more differentiated view, but heavily criticised Gruner.¹⁹⁶

Examining these articles suggests there was cross-spectrum political support for both sides of the debate – amongst journalists, historians and eyewitnesses alike – and it also

¹⁹⁴ Gruner's research was the primary source of discussion in all but one of the articles. See Appendix 1.4a.

¹⁹⁵ The newspapers' political leanings are based on information provided online by the World Press Organisation.

World Press., *Germany. Newspapers and Magazines Online*. Available from: <http://www.worldpress.org/newspapers/EUROPE/Germany.cfm> [Accessed 10th January 2013] See also Appendix 1.4b, and the bibliography.

¹⁹⁶ Full article details can be found in the bibliography.

establishes patterns that we see in the subsequent debate in the autumn, including the juxtaposition of the eyewitness against the critical historian, and concern at lack of critical thinking on German history around the turn of the millennium, which contrasts starkly with the 1990s.¹⁹⁷ These articles also indicate that no matter how much Gruner's research was welcomed, considerable criticism was levelled at Gruner personally, some of it inaccurately, in a manner that would eventually become reminiscent of the Goldhagen debate.¹⁹⁸ The very fact that historians who advocate a critical position over Rosenstraße are the principle focus of accusations is revealing, not because it points out disparities between academic and public perceptions of the protest and its significance, but for the way in which it reflects the opposing desires over the protest's remembrance at a time when themes of suffering and victimhood had returned to public discourses.

iv) **Shifting Patterns of Remembering in the new millennium**

The publication of Wolf Gruner's research may have provided some of the impetus behind the renewed interest in the protest. However, its return in 2003, its 60th anniversary year, is also in many ways unsurprising. Of the factors that distinguish the second phase of the Rosenstraße debate from the first, what is most immediately obvious is the extent to which it has moved on from the small-scale debate of the mid-1990s, restricted as Anne Fuchs suggests to "rarefied academic circles", to a much more extensive one involving a greater number of historians, as well as journalists, filmmakers and eyewitnesses.¹⁹⁹ Nancy Wood suggests that the historical events which permeate the public domain are testament to "the will and desire on the part of some social group or disposition of power to select and organise representations of the past so that these will be embraced by individuals as their own."²⁰⁰ The fact that the

¹⁹⁷ Gruner is deemed an exception to this lack of critical thinking See: Aly, G., 2003. 'Fabrik-Aktion. Misstrauisch gegen Mythen'. *Berliner Zeitung*, 28 February, p.1.

¹⁹⁸ Amongst the criticisms levelled at Gruner in the *Freitag* article is that his work is not all that new, and that he was not the first to draw this conclusion. However, the journalist failed to notice that the source he had cited in making this claim – Diane Schulle's contribution to the 2000 exhibition *Juden in Berlin 1938-1945* did in fact build on Gruner's work and referenced it clearly. Gruner points out the journalist's oversight in a later article. See Kurzer, U., 2003. 'Zivilcourage ohne Anlass? Vor 60 Jahren protestierten Frauen in der Berliner Rosenstraße gegen die Deportationen ihrer jüdischen Angehörigen nun relativiert die Forschung diese Aktionen'. *Freitag*, 28 February, p. 9. and Gruner, W., 2004. 'Ein Historikerstreit? Die Internierung der Juden aus Mischehen in der Rosenstraße 1943. Das Ereignis, seine Diskussion und seine Geschichte'. *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52, pp.5-22, here p.9.

¹⁹⁹ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.154.

²⁰⁰ Wood, N., 1999. *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*. Oxford and New York: Berg, p.2.

Rosenstraße narrative generated such attention this time is therefore testament to its contemporary relevance. This does not suggest, however, that it was previously irrelevant, rather that we can see that shifts in patterns of remembering rendered these events, their potential meaning and their implications for identity significant once again, albeit for different reasons, in this case the return of discourses of German victimhood and suffering. The second phase of the historical debate should be understood in this context.

Towards the end of the last century remembrance began to turn away from the Holocaust and German criminality to the themes of German suffering and victimhood. Helmut Schmitz and Annette Seidel-Aparci have suggested that this phenomenon signifies “the greatest shift in German memory discourses since 1979”, and resulted paradoxically from the efforts to ensure memories of the Holocaust were integrated into collective understanding of the past in the Berlin Republic in the 1990s.²⁰¹ Having finally acknowledged the breadth of German guilt and complicity, they argued, it had become possible to consider how Germans may also have suffered, raising issues of how this could be remembered appropriately.²⁰² Questions of German victimhood and suffering – which are in fact far from new, in spite of some claims that this discourse was taboo-breaking²⁰³ – have always been problematic.

The new phase of occupation with re-discovering victimhood differed from earlier attempts in so far as these memories, so much a part of private and family discourses for so long, were shared empathetically in the public sphere, and no longer simply associated either with a forgetting of German guilt, or with far-Right instrumentalisation.²⁰⁴ Yet, the focus on German victimhood still risked pushing aside

²⁰¹ Schmitz, H., and Seidel-Aparci, A., 2011. *Narratives of Trauma: Discourses of German Wartime Suffering in National and International Perspective*. German Monitor 73, Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi. p.1. See also Beate Kosmala’s comments as cited in: Martin, A., 2004. ‘Protest in der Rosenstraße. Eine Tagung des Zentrums Antisemitismusforschung und des Jüdischen Museums Berlin (29-30. April 2004)’. *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 13, pp. 285-292, here p.290. Kosmala suggested that it was only possible to embrace the Rosenstraße narrative now because notions of German guilt and criminality had been worked on intensively in the previous decade.

²⁰² Schmitz, H., and Seidel-Aparci, A., 2011. *Narratives of Trauma*, p.1.

²⁰³ Ruth Wittlinger, 2006, suggests the victimhood theme had never really been absent, serving as a counter-discourse to that of German guilt and culpability. See her chapter: ‘Taboo or Tradition? The ‘Germans as Victims’ Theme in the Federal Republic until the mid-1990s’. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.62-75, here p.73.

²⁰⁴ Assmann, ‘On the (In)Compatibility of Memories of German Suffering in German Memory’, pp.189-192. See also Langenbacher, E., 2003. ‘Changing Memory Regimes in Contemporary Germany?’

memories of the Holocaust and downplaying awareness of German guilt in favour of an empathetic engagement with German suffering. Although the victimhood theme re-emerged gradually from the late 1990s onwards,²⁰⁵ Aleida Assmann has identified 2003 as the year in which memories of German suffering returned with intensity, via a proliferation of images, reports, books, films, interviews and documentations.²⁰⁶ Memories of German suffering and victimhood were thus already prominent in the very year that the Rosenstraße protest came to the fore. When the debate began it therefore coincided with a readiness to accept and embrace ideas of German suffering. There was greater empathy with the protesters, with intermarried Germans generally than was possible before, and a willingness to reflect on what they had suffered, to defend them. As the debate unfolded, it seemed as though the very idea of the protest's success correlated directly with the protesters' status as victims, ergo to deny the protesters' success seemed to be an attempt to de-legitimise or downplay their claim to victimhood. Seen from this perspective, the intensity of the response towards the Rosenstraße debate, and the backlash against historians Wolfgang Benz, Wolf Gruner and Beate Meyer in particular are more understandable.

v) **The Second Phase: The Rosenstraße Protest in Historical Debate from 2003**

The openness towards debating Rosenstraße in the light of this shift in memory discourses manifested itself in the public debate of autumn 2003 that ensued following the release of Margarethe von Trotta's film *Rosenstraße*, accompanied by historian Wolfgang Benz's review, in which he accused von Trotta of falsifying history.²⁰⁷ It would be easy to see Benz's accusations as a defensive reaction to von Trotta's film premised on its disputed claims to authenticity, and to dismiss the debate as a failed attempt to dismiss the events' significance by discrediting the legitimacy of the filmic interpretation. Yet, this would overlook the willingness and intention to discuss these

German Politics and Society, 21(2), pp.46-68, and Moeller, R.G., 2005. 'Germans as Victims? Thoughts on Post-Cold War History of World War Two's Legacy'. *History & Memory* 17, pp. 145-194.

²⁰⁵ Schmitz for example identifies W.G. Sebald's lectures, and the focus on the air war and expulsion from Eastern territories as key turning points away from the institutionalisation of memories of the Holocaust towards the focus on German suffering. Schmitz, H., 2006. 'The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the 'Historians' Dispute' to German Suffering'. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 93-108, here p. 93.

²⁰⁶ Assmann, 'On the (In)Compatibility of Memories of German Suffering', p.188.

²⁰⁷ Benz, W., 2003. 'Kitsch, Klamotte, Klitterei. Die Legende von der „Rosenstraße“'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 18. September, p.13.

historical events in detail. Far from merely reacting to the film and attendant media attention, or indicating a desire to downplay the significance of the Rosenstraße protest, Benz's review was intended to instigate a controversy and enhance awareness of the events and their significance. That the film merely served as a catalyst for this debate is also reflected in the fact that much of the press attention shifted rapidly from discussing the issues of authenticity, artistic license and the differences between entertainment and documentary films in terms of their responsibility towards accuracy and attention to historical detail, to arguing over questions of historical interpretation. The film didn't so much provoke an unwanted debate, forcing Germans and professional historians alike to confront this aspect of their past, as serve as a tool with which to initiate, and shape a public debate for which there was already an appetite.²⁰⁸

This is further indicated by the close parallels between the reception of von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* in 2003 and her similarly award-winning, controversial 1981 film *Die Bleierne Zeit*.²⁰⁹ Prior to their release both films were praised, only to receive a critical barracking upon their nationwide release. The comparative reception of both films went entirely unnoticed at the time, but seems to suggest a pattern. However, this pattern belies the claims that von Trotta's film forced a confrontation with the protest, and that professional historians in Germany were reluctant to engage in a dialogue suggesting that such claims may, at best, have been exaggerated.²¹⁰ I suggest that the second phase of the Rosenstraße debate in fact indicates that historians sought to maintain a critical memory of the protest precisely because of the more empathetic stance on German suffering and its implications for contemporary constructions of German identity. The importance of Wolfgang Benz's review for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* should not be underestimated. It initiated and also set the parameters for this historical debate, revealing a shift away from German-centred remembering in the longer term.

²⁰⁸ That von Trotta was not invited to participate in the conference, seen at the time as a reflection of the tensions the debate had caused, could equally also support the idea that the film had already served its purpose in facilitating the debate in the first place.

²⁰⁹ These parallels are explored in Chapter 5.

²¹⁰ The fact that the release of the film in the United States in 2004 was used as an opportunity to launch the debate further supports the idea that the film was merely a useful tool, a means of instigating and shaping debate. Boettcher, S., Fischer, C., Imhoof, D., and Steege, D., 2004. H German Summer Forum_Rosenstrasse.

Available from: http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/Rosenstrasse/Rosenstrasse_index.htm [Accessed 29 July 2005].

vi) Patterns and Parallels in Historical Debate

Whilst the focus of debate had shifted, the divisions that had emerged in the 1990s not only remained but also became more firmly entrenched, divided between the competing desires for the historicization of the events versus a critical history of them, but also tied to concepts of victimhood and German suffering, which this chapter also discusses separately. From the outset this second phase of debate was marked by a greater degree of acrimony and hostility both towards and between historians on either side of the discursive divide, than had been present in the first phase. The debate was also notable for its intensity and in particular an emotional identification with the protesters. Attempts to reinforce a critical interpretation of the events, to cast doubt on the protest's success, seemed to be greeted as attacks on the protesters and all that they stood for. This emotional identification with the key protagonists reflects the German public's desire for an unencumbered engagement with the period, in the early 2000s. It also points to the moral dimension in writing on Nazism that has intensified since unification. Mary Fulbrook has remarked on how historical controversies have become more vitriolic than ever.²¹¹ Certainly this characterised the debate over the Rosenstraße protest, and manifested itself in a number of accusations, amounting to attacks on historians' integrity, professionalism, and historical agenda, even effectively suggesting that they were doing the regime's bidding in casting doubt on the protest's success, and that sections of the German media were also complicit.²¹²

In this regard, the Rosenstraße debate took on patterns established across historical debates in general in recent years; accusations of trivialisation have become commonplace since the Historians' Debate. It also took on a similarity to the Goldhagen debate, in terms of the hostility and aggression that featured throughout, albeit for different reasons. Where Goldhagen himself had been the target of criticism

²¹¹ Fulbrook, *German National Identity after the Holocaust*, p.238.

²¹² See for example: Stoltzfus, N., 2003. 'Die Wahrheit jenseits der Akten. Wer nur den NS-Dokumenten vertraut, verkennt den Widerstand der Deutschen, Anmerkungen zum Historikerstreit um die Rosenstraße'. *Die Zeit*, 30th October, pp.10-12. Stoltzfus, N., 2005. 'Historical Evidence and Plausible History: Interpreting the Berlin Gestapo's Attempted "Final Roundup" of Jews also known as the "Factory Action"'. *Central European History* 38 (3), pp.450-459. Gruner, W., 2005. 'A Historikerstreit? A Reply to N., Stoltzfus' Response'. *Central European History* 38 (3), pp. 460-464.

Leugers, A., 2006. 'Widerstand gegen die Rosenstraße. Kritische Anmerkungen zu einer Neuerscheinung von Wolf Gruner'. Available from:

<http://aps.sulb.uni-saarland.de/theologie.geschichte/inhalt/2006/11.html>
[Accessed, 13 June 2006].

and aggression during the controversy, in the second phase of the Rosenstraße debate, it was the turn of the critical historians to be targets of criticism and aggression, precisely because they advocated a critical confrontation with the Nazi past, and more specifically with resistance to National Socialism.

The critical historians functioned in this phase of the Rosenstraße debate as the ‘imaginary accuser’, to adopt Lars Rensmann’s term. This role, Rensmann suggests, allows unmastered feelings of guilt to be projected onto an individual or individuals, in order to de-legitimise their arguments, and more specifically, the implications of those arguments.²¹³ This had both a political and a psychological function, he argued, allowing claims to be discredited as irrational, absurd, out of touch generalizations that couldn’t be substantiated, and illegitimate and hostile motives to be attributed to the author(s) thereby undermining their hypotheses.²¹⁴ The accusations that were traded in the Rosenstraße debate, whether by fellow historians, journalists or even eyewitnesses, by and large positioned German historians, specifically Wolfgang Benz, Wolf Gruner and Beate Meyer, in the role of the imaginary accuser in this debate.²¹⁵ By suggesting for example that there existed a reluctance, an unwillingness to accept the interpretation of a successful protest, and even that it signified a taboo, advocates of the protest’s success were able to present their arguments as the more progressive in terms of ‘coming to terms with the past’, whilst de-legitimising the opposing interpretations. Yet, this position did not go unchallenged. Defence of, and support for a more critical interpretation was also indicated throughout the duration of the debate and beyond.²¹⁶

Why then do these accusations matter? In part they indicate that the Rosenstraße debate had begun to follow patterns established in previous debates, but they also point to the intensity of remembering. When considered collectively, what these accusations reveal

²¹³ Rensmann, L., 1999. ‘Holocaust Memory and Mass Media in Contemporary Reflections on the Goldhagen Debate’. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 33(1), pp.59-76, here p.59 and pp.66-67.

²¹⁴ Ibid., My paraphrasing.

²¹⁵ See for example, Fuhr, E., 2003. ‘Geschichte und Fiktion’. *Berliner Morgenpost*, 19 September, p.12. Jah, A., 2005. ‘Tagungsbrichte – Protest in der Rosenstraße 28/29.4.2004’. *Bulletin für Faschismus- und Weltkriegsforschung*, 24, pp.110-121. Marcuse, H., 29 July 2004. FORUM: _Rosenstrasse_(solicited response) Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=767> [Accessed 25 July 2005]. Seidel, H-D., 2003. ‘Ein Frauenheldenleben. Zweifel los: Der Film „Rosenstrasse“ und seine Widersprüche’. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20 September, p.33. Note this list is not exhaustive.

²¹⁶ Distel, B., Dr., 2003. ‘Unredlich; N.Stoltzfus: Die Wahrheit jenseits der Akten’. *Die Zeit*, 13 November, p.17. Esch, C., 2003, ‘Mythenzerstörung’. *Berliner Zeitung*, 26 September, p.16. Kellerhoff, S.F., 2006. Die Entzauberung des Mythos Rosenstraße. *Berliner Morgenpost*, 28 October, p.16.

is a deepening of the divisions over how the protest should be integrated into German historical consciousness, and what its implications should be, highlighting the shifting dynamics of historical debate. Although the desire for a historicization of the past remained strong, a factor which the volume and intensity of the accusations alone attest to, and it was well supported amongst German historians and historians of Germany alike, it was also in decline, at least in terms of historiographical trends. Developments in historical research, and the debate itself seemed to cast sufficient doubt on the long-standing interpretation of the protest as the cause of the detainees' release, suggesting that it had finally given way to a more critical remembering of the events. Whilst historians are far from reaching a consensus of opinion on the matter, the decline in the accusatory tone of writings on Rosenstraße reflects this shift. As the debate has receded in more recent years, it also seems that we are witnessing a return to earlier arguments. Nathan Stoltzfus' 2008 article, for example, signalled a return to the focus on questions of wider opposition, seeking to locate the protest once again within a pattern of civilian opposition to Nazi rule.²¹⁷ What had altered, however, was the notably less accusatory tone, and the absence of any suggestion that one act of resistance should be considered more worthy of recognition than any other.

vii) Reconsidering Rosenstraße in the Light of Victimological Discourses

The intensity of the dispute over Rosenstraße – beyond any parallels with previous debates – can also be explained by the aforementioned shifts in German memory culture towards notions of victimhood and their implications for the competing interpretations of the protest in Rosenstraße and the concomitant inferences for German self-understanding in the present. Although this victimological discourse (in which Germans identified themselves as victims of Nazism) was more politically progressive than at any previous time, where historical interpretations of the events in Rosenstraße have been concerned it has nevertheless proven problematic. In this context the protest took on an altered meaning, combining notions of resistance and victimhood. Both have proven themselves to be important features of identity construction. Writing in 2006 on

²¹⁷ Stoltzfus, N., 2008. 'Helden ohne Namen'. *Einestages Zeitgeschichten auf Spiegel Online* Available from: http://einestages.spiegel.de/static/topicalbumbackground/1477/1/helden_ohne_namen.html [Accessed 18 March 2008]. Along with the examples of civilian opposition to the Crucifix Decree, and Bishop Galen's opposition to the Euthanasia policy, Stoltzfus also contrasts the Rosenstraße protest with the protests at Witten, Lünen, Hamm and Bochum later in 1943.

issues surrounding the representation of German victimhood, Helmut Schmitz observed that, “while suffering is ethically neutral, with respect to the history of National Socialism the concepts of victim and perpetrator are ethically coded, victims being the objects of an act of morally reprehensible victimisation.”²¹⁸ Any depiction of Germans as victims did not correlate with the image of Germans as perpetrators, making it difficult to reconcile concepts of victimhood without seeming to relativise the Holocaust.²¹⁹ Yet, even though claims to victimhood were said not to equate with the suffering of Nazism’s victims, Schmitz suggested that this discourse has indeed employed images and rhetoric associated with the Holocaust.²²⁰

If the situation for so-called ordinary Germans was therefore problematic, not least for its implicit equation of their suffering with that inflicted onto Nazism’s victims, representing intermarried Christian Germans has been even more complex. How could the experiences of these non-Jewish Germans – which differed in many respects from those of so-called ordinary Germans – be represented without either equating them with, or worse, overshadowing the suffering of Holocaust victims, including those to whom they were also related? Yet, the Rosenstraße narrative was also potentially very significant. As Helmut Schmitz also suggested, the “potential for stabilising a homogenously national or ethnic collective” exists in narratives of German suffering; thus in this context, the Rosenstraße protest was potentially useful, but also raised complex questions of how German suffering could be re-imagined through it.²²¹ The Rosenstraße narrative was appealing in so far as it represented Germans in a positive light, as the very antithesis of the figure of the Nazi, namely moral, courageous and Philo-Semitic.

The narrative’s potential appeal also made the competing constructions of identity particularly contentious. Here was a narrative that not only suggested that ordinary Germans could also be included as victims, but also demonstrated its potential by equating suffering between members of Nazism’s primary victim group and members of German society in a way that would ordinarily have been rejected had it not been for

²¹⁸ Schmitz, ‘The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the ‘Historians’ Dispute’ to German Suffering’, here p.94.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Schmitz, and Seidel-Aparci, *Narratives of Trauma*, p.8.

the issue of intermarriage. It was as if because they were married it had suddenly become acceptable to equate their experiences even though one half belonged to Nazism's primary victim group and the other did not. Writing on the subject of representations of victimhood, Omer Bartov examined how self-identity has been distinguished by a pattern of defining one's enemies and making victims.²²² This analogy is pertinent to the study of Rosenstraße, as it allows for an examination of the competing narrative structures, as well as assessment of the reactions to the attempt to challenge the different readings of the protest. I suggest that whilst intermarried German Jews are undeniably codified as victims, as are so-called partial Jews, and the figure of the Nazi is consistently identified as the enemy serving as the opposite, or 'other' of everything the contemporary German wishes and seeks not to be, it is necessary to consider how intermarried non-Jewish Germans have been codified and what inferences can be drawn from these re-imaginings, noting that the question of who is codified as victim, and of what, receives varying answers.

This final section of the chapter shows that interpretations attempted to position the protesters in varying degrees within the category of victim. We see that the risk of offsetting German suffering with Jewish was not the only issue that caused contention, rather some interpretations did indeed position the protesters not only in the category of victim, but also sought to include them in the category of victims of the Holocaust. This created a problematic comparison between groups of victims, whose suffering, as I have suggested, was both related but also incomparable, eliding the differences between non-Jewish and Jewish victims, and effectively endorsing a globalised model of victimhood in which all are seen as innocent and equally so.²²³ More problematically still, we see in some cases that the protesters are identified as the greater victims, and placed in a position that is incongruous with contemporary Germany's commitment to an inclusive picture of the past. At the opposite end of the spectrum, however, historians also sought to acknowledge German suffering and hardship, but to

²²² Bartov, O., 1998. 'Defining Enemies, Making Victims: Germans, Jews and the Holocaust'. *The American Historical Review* 103(3), pp.771-816.

²²³ Schmitz, and Seidel-Aparci, *Narratives of Trauma*, p.7. Such a model also failed to take into account the diversity of intermarried Germans as a group, and the fact that some were instrumental in their spouses' suffering, opting to divorce their partners, which left them exposed to the full extent of the Holocaust. On this see: Meyer, B., 2000. 'The Mixed Marriage. A Guarantee of Survival or a Reflection of German Society during the Nazi regime?' In: D. Bankier, ed. *Probing the Depths of German Anti-Semitism German Society and the Persecution of the Jews, 1933-1941*. New York and Jerusalem: Berghahn Books, pp.54-77.

contextualise it within the wider perspective of complicity and inactivity, so as to allow German victimhood to be acknowledged and simultaneously prevent memories of the suffering inflicted by Germans from being displaced.

If we consider Nathan Stoltzfus' interpretation first, we see that a picture emerges of the different ways in which the key protagonists are codified. What becomes apparent is the tendency to reinforce the binary division between German and Jew – even though “many German Jews saw themselves first and foremost as Germans”.²²⁴ Linguistically, the concepts of German and Jew, it is implied, are mutually exclusive, rendered comprehensible by the one being defined against the other, in a problematic construction of identity that fosters the notion that Jewishness is distinct from Germanness. The codification of German protagonists, by contrast, can be broken down further still into three categories: the intermarried German, the Nazi and other ordinary Germans. Here the figure of the Nazi stands for the enemy, from which the figure of the “ordinary” German is distinct, whilst Germans married to Jews, it is inferred, can be distinguished from this grouping, excluded from it by virtue of their intermarriages, and are therefore even more distinct from the Nazi than the ordinary German.

Undeniably, intermarried Germans straddled the ideological divide, seemingly excluded from the German community on a social level because of their Jewish families, yet also members of that German community, a factor that enabled them, theoretically at least, to protect their spouses from the full extent of the regime's anti-Semitic policies. Yet, given that the figure of the intermarried German can be distinguished both from that of the Nazi and of the ordinary German, seen from a contemporary perspective, this makes it even more of an ideal figure, on which to base a model of identity that can be empathised with and aspired to. It reconfigures the social outsider position of intermarried Germans as a positive source of identity, aligning it with notions of victimhood and inferring that this was also a matter of principled choice, as a result of which intermarried Germans suffered.

In part this reflects a continuity with the first phase of debate. Stoltzfus' interpretation then inferred that intermarried Germans' opposition resulted from a conscious political

²²⁴ Bartov, 'Defining Enemies, Making Victims', p.797. This is a consistent feature of Stoltzfus' work, opposing German and Jew linguistically, thereby reinforcing the idea that the two concepts, and identities are mutually exclusive.

choice, an unbreakable solidarity, rather than being a consequence of personal despair and desperation as a result of the detentions at Rosenstraße. But it also reflects a worrying trend in which victimhood is universalised and all victims are deemed to be innocent, transcending differences by equating the suffering of non-Jewish Germans with that of their Jewish spouses and children. Whilst it might reasonably be expected that such an equation would provoke a backlash of criticism, the fact that it was repeatedly suggested indicates the extent to which there was a desire for an unproblematic past, which could stabilise German self-image as the victim. Whilst Stoltzfus' interpretation undeniably highlights Jewish victimhood at the hands of Nazi perpetrators, he also assimilates German victimhood, asserting a degree of German martyrdom into that reading.

His interpretations have also drawn heavily on the language and imagery of suffering associated with narratives of the Holocaust, assigning these to intermarried Germans, eliding any difference between their suffering and that of their spouses. This allows for a worrying understanding in which Germans are re-imagined not only as victims of Nazism, but victims of the Holocaust as well. Whilst Stoltzfus therefore positioned intermarried Germans as victims of Nazi anti-Semitism alongside their spouses, he went a step further in suggesting that in some cases intermarried German women may even have suffered to a greater extent than some Jewish intermarried women.²²⁵ Here Stoltzfus allows the non-Jewish German to displace the Jewish German and prioritises the suffering of former over the latter. Moreover, such a narrative construction arguably fosters understanding of intermarried Germans as both victim and martyr, suggesting that these individuals suffered because they remained married. It infers that German suffering was a direct consequence of Jewish persecution, and that these Germans at least may therefore understand themselves as the true victims of Nazism.²²⁶

In addition, Stoltzfus also suggested that their suffering did not simply cease with the demise of the Third Reich, rather that intermarried Germans were also victims of a

²²⁵ This suggestion stems from the different way intermarriages were categorised and therefore the way those in privileged and non-privileged intermarriages were drawn separately into persecution as a result. Stoltzfus suggests for example, that intermarried Jewish women were better protected by their marriages than non-Jewish women who were subject to social persecution as well as financial and material hardship. See for example, his *Resistance of the Heart: Intermarriage and the Rosenstraße Protest*, pp.41-9 and p.156.

²²⁶ This ties into Omer Bartov's observation that there remains a tendency to emphasise German victimhood and martyrdom. Bartov, 'Defining Enemies, Making Victims', p.794.

post-war silence on the subject of intermarriage and the protest. The implicit association with this position is that by ignoring the Rosenstraße protest, Germans are failing to confront the Nazi past and allow a more complete picture to emerge. Germans therefore may lament this supposed silence, which serves to reinforce notions of their own victimhood. Whilst Rosenstraße is a narrative about the Holocaust, the codification of its protagonists has the result that it is the German experience of persecution and German opposition that are at the forefront, whilst Jewish victimhood is in danger of becoming lost in the narrative, relegated to the background, and to an extent even supplanted by the notions of the greater suffering of German intermarried women. Added to this is the implication that not only did this particular section of German society become victims because of their Jewish spouses, but also that there is a continuity of their suffering that has outlasted the Third Reich and continues into the present day, thereby making intermarried Germans Nazism's enduring victims.²²⁷ This certainly points to a worrying trend, a return to a revisionist stance. Stoltzfus' interpretation presents an idealised model of identity based on a homogenised interpretation of intermarried Germans as heroic, steadfast, and philo-Semitic, yet in so doing implicitly excludes German Jews from this conception of German national identity – they remain the 'other', serving as a catalyst for positive German identity in which memories of the Holocaust may be overcome, Germans may be redeemed, and normalization, in which seemingly positive aspects of the past are reclaimed, may proceed.

Stoltzfus' codification of German victimhood – however problematic – parallels broader trends in the recent victimological discourses. It is also a reflection of the trend identified by Stefan Berger, arguing that in the “1990s, a group of American historians of Germany made important contributions to the attempt to historicize experiences of German victimhood”.²²⁸ Yet, perhaps because of the emphasis on German victimhood, a tendency has also emerged re-focusing attention on Nazism's intended victims, rather than further validating the current German-centred remembering, which emphasises German heroism, martyrdom and suffering. This should not be understood as indicating

²²⁷ This would help to clarify why, for example, there was such a negative reaction to the suggestion that more intermarried German women than men divorced their spouses and therefore contributed to their deportation, rather than saving them from it as the image of the protester implies.

²²⁸ Berger, S., 2006. 'On Taboos, Traumas, and Other Myths: Why the Debate about German Victims of the Second World War is not a Historians' Controversy'. In: B. Niven, ed. *Germans as Victims*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 210-223, here p.217.

a desire to reject the victims' discourse per se, so much as one to integrate it into collective memory without reverting to an exculpatory myth, or a moralising apologia, which in turn would jeopardise the commitment to an inclusive image of the past. As Berger also pointed out, the contemporary victims discourse is not an extreme-right discourse, but it remains vulnerable to exploitation, "if and when the participants in the debate ignore and sideline the perpetrators' discourse".²²⁹ Focusing on intermarried Germans, emphasising their heroism and defiance to the extent that has been seen in the debate over Rosenstraße, arguably leaves it open to such instrumentalisation. It would seem that in view of this historians who advocate a critical remembering of the protest do so in order to promote different notions of the protest so that it can contribute to the inclusive images of the past, without however destabilising it in the process.

In stark contrast to the codification of the participants in the Rosenstraße protest as promoted by Stoltzfus, Gruner and Meyer divide them into three categories, in their respective narratives, identifying the Nazi as the perpetrator, and German Jews as Nazism's victims, who are also distinct from 'ordinary Germans'. Rather than falling back onto old categories of perpetrator and victim, both Gruner and Meyer make clear that the Holocaust was perpetrated by the Nazi regime, but they neither entirely absolve nor condemn ordinary Germans. Rather each attempts to emphasise the diversity of the response from within society both to the regime and to the Holocaust, showing how ordinary Germans including intermarried Germans attempted to aid, but also abandoned German Jews. This facilitates a more self-critical model of identity, and one that rejects an idealised re-imagining of the German-Jewish relationship.

By focusing on the persecution of Jewish Germans, Gruner and Meyer's narratives focus remembering on the regime's principal victims, but also allow a more diverse image of German society to be reflected as a result. They both show the array of opposition to the Holocaust, yet without idealising those who opposed and contrast it with the lack of opposition from within German society, so as to provide a sense of balance rather than reinforcing a one-sided and idealised remembering, that is at risk of simplifying the categorisation into victim or perpetrator in an either/or divide. By focusing on individuals who do not fall neatly into any particular category, it becomes

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 221.

possible to see the limitations of the victimhood discourse; hence both Gruner and Meyer advocate the importance of remembering critically. The implication of this critical self-reflexive identity is that any idealised remembering of German heroism, in which German suffering is also prioritised, will inevitably result in an amnesia around guilt and complicity, and a forgetting of Nazism's victims for the sake of a positive sense of identity, again leaving memories of victimhood open to exploitation. Thus, it is hoped that by advocating a critical remembering, which allows for a recognition of the difficulties, dangers and hardships experienced by some of Germany's population, but aligns them with the knowledge of perpetration and responsibility, a critical self-awareness can develop that does not simply revert to a revisionist apologia.²³⁰

Analysing the Rosenstraße debate in relation to the victims discourse has highlighted the potential implications of this shift in remembering. It has demonstrated that there was support for an elision of difference between Jewish and non-Jewish suffering, which would facilitate a positive national identity in which Germans were, to some degree at least, rehabilitated. A model of identity based on an understanding of the protesters as both honourable, heroic resisters, and victims of Nazism was certainly appealing, particularly following on from a decade in which the extent of German guilt and responsibility had been at the forefront of public discourses. The broad acceptance of such an interpretation indicates a desire to overcome the past by re-imagining the Holocaust as a mutual tragedy for Jewish and non-Jewish Germans, which in turn legitimises a focus on German suffering, suggesting that they have suffered both for and because of German Jews. As worrying as this trend is, however, the Rosenstraße debate has also underlined the strength of opposition to incorporating the protest into the victimhood discourse in this way. Amongst historians in, and of Germany, there is now a far greater acceptance of a critical remembering that offers a less tragic, idealised model of identity. Recognising German suffering but not allowing an elision of difference between Jewish and non-Jewish victimhood, nor a prioritisation of German suffering, allows a more differentiated picture to emerge that is more in line with the commitment to creating an inclusive image of the past. This is reflected not only in

²³⁰ See for example, Gruner, W., 2004. 'Ein Historikerstreit? Die Internierung der Juden aus Mischehen in der Rosenstraße 1943. Das Ereignis, seine Diskussion und seine Geschichte'. *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52, pp.5-22; Meyer, B., 2004. 'Geschichte im Film: Judenverfolgung, Mischehen und der Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943'. *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52, pp.23-36.

historiography but also in cultural representations, and in memorialisation in particular, as we will see in Chapter 6.

viii) Chapter Conclusions.

In recent years, it seems as if the Rosenstraße debate has entered a period of decline. The publications, reviews and critiques that followed in the years immediately after the public debate of 2003 added little to existing knowledge, and largely served to reinforce the issues that had been evoked during that debate itself, but they did not re-ignite it.²³¹ Nor have subsequent shifts in historiographical trends caused any further debate, even though both Richard J Evans and Saul Friedländer's interpretations have gone further than Gruner and Meyer's in so far as they have suggested the significance that has been attributed to the protest has been exaggerated.²³² Critical interpretation of the protest is now the dominant trend in German historiography. In his 2006 monograph on German resistance, for example, historian Gerd R.Überschar remarked on the courage of the protesters, and whilst his summary partly acknowledged arguments proposed by Stoltzfus, it came down more in favour of Gruner's, and certainly of a critical remembering.²³³ The fact that the critical interpretation dominates I suggest, reflects a shift away from German-centred remembering in historiography, so as to prevent memories of Jewish suffering from being displaced.

The 70th anniversary of the Factory Action and Rosenstraße protest earlier this year, triggered a renewed interest, albeit briefly. Whilst it did not result in a new phase of debate, it re-confirmed the shift and dynamics in patterns of remembering. The anniversary afforded Nathan Stoltzfus the occasion to reiterate his earlier interpretation,

²³¹ Conway, J.S., November 2005. 'Review, Antonia Leugers ed. Berlin Rosenstraße 2-4'. Vol XI, no.11 *Association of Contemporary Church Historians*, Available from: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/akz/akz2605.htm> [Accessed 14 July 2006]; Gruner, W., 2005. *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße. Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Verfolgung der Mischehen 1943*. Frankfurt. a. M: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag. Leugers, A., ed., 2005. *Berlin, Rosenstraße 2-4: Protest in der NS-Diktatur. Neue Forschungen zum Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*. Annweiler: Plöger. Leugers, A., 2006. *Widerstand gegen die Rosenstraße. Kritische Anmerkungen zu einer Neuerscheinung von Wolf Gruner*. Available from: <http://aps.sulb.uni-saarland.de/theologie.geschichte/inhalt/2006/11.html> [Accessed, 13 June 2006]; Neander, J., March 2006. Review Wolf Gruner *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße*. Available from: <http://hsozkult.geschichte.h-berlin.de/rezensionen/2006-1-145> [Accessed 21 June 2006].

²³² Evans, R.J., 2009. *The Third Reich at War*. New York: Penguin; Friedländer, S., 2008. *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945*. New York: Harper Collins.

²³³ Überschar, G.R., 2006. *Für ein anderes Deutschland. Der deutsche Widerstand gegen den NS-Staat 1933-1945*, Frankfurt a.M: Fischer, pp.83-84.

without however offering any substantially new insights. In continuity with his earlier arguments, he emphasised the protest's long absence from resistance historiography and commemoration, and that the protest belied the claim that resistance was honourable but had no chance of success. His interpretation also continued to prioritise notions of German victimhood, of their heroic suffering the non-Jewish spouses were subjected to. Stoltzfus argued:

Die Protestaktion der Frauen in der Rosenstraße ist der Höhepunkt einer Geschichte von Erniedrigung, Diskriminierung, Einschüchterung und Androhung von Gewalt, der sich die Ehepartner, die in sogenannten „Mischehen“ lebten, seit der Machtergreifung 1933 ausgesetzt sahen.²³⁴

Whilst Stoltzfus contributed to the 70th anniversary however, the fact that his interpretation was published in *Vorwärts*, the SPD's official newspaper, rather than in the mainstream press or respected academic journals, reflects the shift in dynamics. By contrast, Wolf Gruner was the keynote speaker, participating in the commemorative events, speaking on the radio and publishing a new book.²³⁵ Whilst his new book similarly offered little by way of new insights, it further consolidated his existing interpretation. Gruner stated:

Heute überwiegt unter Historikern die Haltung, dass der »Frauenprotest« vom Februar/März 1943 als einzigartig zu würdigen ist, ganz unabhängig von der Frage, ob er für die Freilassung der Angehörigen aus der Gestapohaft verantwortlich zu machen ist.²³⁶

Gruner's statement reflected the shift in historical interpretation and also indicated the Rosenstraße protest's continuing significance in contemporary understanding of Germany's resistance history. This position is further reflected in historian Andreas Nachama's comments in the foreword to Gruner's book, in which he asserted:

²³⁴ Stoltzfus, N., 2013. '70. Jahrestag des einzigen öffentlichen Protestes für deutsche Juden. „Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder!“' *Vorwärts*. Online edition. Available from: http://www.vorwaerts.de/Politik/Historie/91468/protest_rosenstrasse.html;jsessionid=EA0E65F0379293FDAA1DF0C87E074B7A [Accessed 01.03.2013].

²³⁵ Langels, O., 2013. 'Einzigartiger Akt des Aufbegehrens. Die Proteste in der Rosenstraße im Februar 1943'. Berlin: Deutschland RadioKultur. Available from: <http://www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendungen/fazit/2023876/> [Accessed 01.03.2013]. Within the time constraints it has not been possible to offer an in-depth analysis of Gruner's latest publication in this chapter.

²³⁶ Gruner, W., 2013. *Gedenkort Rosenstraße 2-4. Internierung und Protest im NS-Staat*, Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, p.67.

Ob die anlässlich der »Fabrik-Aktion« Ende Februar 1943 Verhafteten, die mit nichtjüdischen Ehepartnern verheiratet waren, ohnehin freigekommen wären, wie die neuere Forschung meinst, ist beim Andenken an diesen Frauenprotest meiner Einschätzung nach sekundär: der Frauenprotest war singular und ist deshalb von großer Bedeutung. Selbst wenn der Protest gescheitert wäre und die Verhafteten deportiert worden wären, gibt es in der zwölfjährigen NS-Geschichte kein vergleichbares Ereignis zivilen Protests einer größeren Gruppe in der Öffentlichkeit über mehrere Tage.²³⁷

At the time of writing in 2013 the dynamics of historical interpretation have shifted considerably since the 1980s, but have also now stabilised. It seems likely therefore that the critical interpretation will remain dominant for the foreseeable future.

²³⁷ Nachama, A., 2013. 'Vorwort'. In: W. Gruner, *Gedenkort Rosenstraße 2-4. Internierung und Protest im NS-Staat*, Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, pp.7-8, here p.8.

Chapter 3

Patterns of Popular History between 1990 and 2002: Shifting Attitudes in Gernot Jochheim's *Protest in der Rosenstraße*

1.

Coinciding with the year in which Germany was formally unified, Berlin author and secondary school teacher Gernot Jochheim (1942-) published *Protest in der Rosenstraße*, a work of popular history that would subsequently be twice revised and republished under amended titles. *Protest in der Rosenstraße* was the first semi-fictional work to provide an extensive account of the Rosenstraße protest in German. It centres on Hans Grossmann, a partial Jew who was detained at Rosenstraße and went on to join the Jewish underground resistance. The subsequent editions added historical analysis and also included documentary sections, but left the central narrative, that is Hans Grossmann's story, almost entirely unchanged.²³⁸ To date, however, Jochheim's first edition has not received any critical attention. This chapter constitutes a first step in this direction.²³⁹

In contrast to the first edition, however, the second edition, which was published in February 1993 and hence coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Factory Action and Rosenstraße protest, was accessible to a wider readership and was also largely positively reviewed.²⁴⁰ It appears that, in the aftermath of the *Wende*, the story Jochheim was telling resonated with a much wider German readership. Yet, it also highlighted a gap in existing historical research.²⁴¹ Journalist Zafir Cohen, writing in the *Berliner Zeitung* observed:

Das Buch erhebt nicht den Anspruch, die Bedeutung des Frauenprotests in der Rosenstraße messen zu können, den genauen Hergang der Aktion und konkrete Zahl der daran beteiligten Personen zu nennen. Es ist auch keine historische

²³⁸ The alterations are discussed separately in this chapter.

²³⁹ Although Stoltzfus is widely credited for his best-selling 1996 book *Resistance of the Heart*, the German translation only became available in 1999.

²⁴⁰ Jochheim, G., 2000. 'Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder! Berliner Frauen gegen Goebbels'. *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, 9, pp.93-100, here p.100. Jochheim also notes for example that Nathan Stoltzfus' 1989 article for *Die Zeit* prompted no notable reaction.

²⁴¹ As we have already noted in Chapter 2 historical research was already in the process of being conducted in particular by Nathan Stoltzfus. However it had yet to become more widely known, and it would take until the end of the decade for his findings to be available in German at the level of the a mass market.

Untersuchung – gerade sie aber fehlt am fünfzigsten Jahrestag jenes Protests.
Das kann jedoch kein Vorwurf an den Autor Gernot Jochheim sein.²⁴²

Whilst Jochheim's *Protest in der Rosenstraße* is not an historical account in itself, it does allow for an exploration of the interfaces between Jochheim's work as a popular historian and that of academic historians because it highlights which memories have been constructed in what way. Historian Robert G. Moeller, writing in 2005, argued that we need to consider the multiple approaches in collective memory, and reflect on how and by whom memories are forged. In his opinion, popular histories tend to enjoy a greater popular appeal, which is in no small part due to their accessibility and their readability.²⁴³ Consequently, they have the potential to exert a larger impact on public understanding than they are necessarily given credit for. It is one of the reusable texts that carry society's self-image that Jan Assmann identifies in his work on cultural memory.²⁴⁴

Whilst the extent of Jochheim's actual contribution to memories of the protest may be a matter of contestation, and perhaps one that cannot be measured, the fact that it has been used as a credible point of reference for historians, journalists, biographers, filmmakers, memorial actors and academics renders it a valid object of study alongside the other media of memory examined in this thesis. Moreover, it illustrates, in line with the framework of cultural memory theory adopted in this thesis, the way in which memories interact with one another, how they may also change over time, and what this indicates; we note that the impact of historiographical developments is also reflected in Jochheim's text in the third edition, published in 2002. As this chapter shows, *Protest in der Rosenstraße* has also been incorporated into other representations, most notably the Topography of Terror's permanent exhibition, whilst Jochheim himself has been a notable figure in campaigning for the protest's memorialisation. Elements of Hans Grossmann's story analysed below also bear close comparison with Margarethe von

²⁴² Cohen, Z., 1993c. 'Geschichte für Schüler erzählt. Über das einzige Buch zum Thema'. *Berliner Zeitung*. 27 February, p.19.

²⁴³ Moeller, 'Germans as Victims?', pp.181-182.

²⁴⁴ Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', p.129.

Trotta's 2003 film, examined in Chapter 5, particularly where central female characters are concerned, as well as in its depictions of the protest.²⁴⁵

In section 1 of this chapter I consider the background to Jochheim's popular history, followed by a synopsis of the core narrative, Hans Grossmann's story. I consider the style and structure of *Protest in der Rosenstraße*, paying particular attention to the function of photographic images and textual extracts within the narrative before proceeding with a thematic analysis of the text. In section 2, I examine the changes to the core narrative in the second and third edition, the possible reasons for them, and their implications for our understanding of the events. This is followed by a consideration of the additional sections – an historical analysis and summary of the protest's representation between 1945 and the present – in the 1993 edition, before continuing with an analysis of the alterations and additional sections and documents in the 2002 edition, which included the introduction of the testimonies that influenced the original popular history, newspaper articles and commemorative speeches.

i) Writing in Context: Influences and Catalysts

Jochheim's motivation for writing about Rosenstraße, and the influences on his work, are multifaceted. By the time he published *Protest in der Rosenstraße* he was already well established as an author, writing primarily on the subject of non-violent action, the Nazi past and on German-Jewish history.²⁴⁶ Jochheim notes in the third edition of his popular history that came across references to the protest whilst conducting research for his 1984 publication *Die Gewaltfreie Aktion* (Jochheim, 2002, p.107). However, with only a thin amount of source material available to him at that point in time, he decided to conduct further research after the book was published. This included a search for eyewitnesses and eventually he was able to invite three people to talk about their lives during the Nazi era at the school where he was then teaching. The occasion proved a turning point in his literary approach to the subject matter, and as he has himself

²⁴⁵ These similarities, already referenced in footnote number 134 (p.39) of Chapter 1 of this thesis, will be explored in Chapter 5.

²⁴⁶ Jochheim has authored and co-authored a number of works, primarily on the theme of non-violent action, too numerous to list here. He also co-edits the magazine *gewaltfreie action*.

confirmed, it proved instrumental in his decision on the format of *Protest in der Rosenstraße*.²⁴⁷ As Jochheim has explained:

Dabei kam mir die Idee, im Wesentlichen auf der Grundlage dieser Berichte eine erzählende autobiographisch konzipierte Dokumentation zu gestalten, in deren Mittelpunkt die Leidensgeschichte der Berliner Juden und die Ereignisse in der Rosenstraße stehen sollten (Jochheim, 2002, p.107).

As Jochheim's above explanation illustrates, issues of authenticity were key. This is evident in the centrality of eyewitness testimony to his narrative, and in his explanation of the book's origins, in which he identifies his witnesses and explains how and why he constructed his narrative. The importance of the eyewitness is striking, and is something I come back to in this chapter and in the one that follows.

The influences behind *Protest in der Rosenstraße* must be seen within their wider social as well as political context. Jochheim's emphasis on non-violent action, and on positioning Jewish suffering at the centre of this narrative, are suggestive of the influence of generational remembering. Born in 1942, Jochheim is too young to have any personal recollection of the Third Reich. However, like many members of his generation of Germans, he has clearly felt compromised by the past. Jochheim is a member of the 1968 generation, which critically questioned their parents' involvement in Nazi crimes and the subsequent silence surrounding them.²⁴⁸ By the 1980s, the decade in which Jochheim began researching and writing *Protest in der Rosenstraße*, patterns of cultural memory had undergone considerable change, facilitated by the burgeoning trend in grassroots history and the interest in Germany's Jewish past, as a result of the 1979 screening of the American mini-series *Holocaust* discussed in Chapter One. Jochheim's engagement with the protest was therefore both timely and in keeping with these trends. It seems likely that he intentionally built on this public interest in the German-Jewish past.

²⁴⁷ Will, K., 2003. 'Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße. Interview mit Gernot Jochheim über ein lange unbeachtet gebliebenes Kapitel unserer Geschichte'. blz, 11. Available from: <http://.gew-berlin.de/2621.htm> [Accessed 22 May 2006]. Around the same time that he came into contact with Nathan Stoltzfus, who had just begun his own research into the protest.

²⁴⁸ Chris Homewood similarly remarks on the way members of the 2nd generation felt compromised by the Nazi past. Homewood, *From Baader to Prada. The Representation of Urban Terrorism in German-Language Film*, pp.34-5.

Yet, whilst interest in the Nazi past and in the Holocaust had intensified, historical and political discourses had also diversified, leading to attempts by conservative historians and politicians alike to gain distance from the Third Reich in order to promote a positive sense of national identity. This manifested itself most clearly in the disputes over approaches to the Nazi past during the Historians' Debate of 1986-1987. Arguably this conservative backlash also had a significant bearing on Jochheim's decision to write about Rosenstraße. As we see in this chapter his popular history attempts to combine interest in the German-Jewish past with the desire for a positive national identity. In so doing *Protest in der Rosenstraße* re-imagines a more differentiated German-Jewish relationship, offering different conceptions of identity that are illuminating with regard to conceptions of the 'self' and 'other' in the early years of unified Germany.

ii) **Hans Grossmann's story: A Synopsis**²⁴⁹

The story begins with Hans Grossmann, the protagonist whom the reader encounters in the present as an elderly gentleman, who looks back on his experiences during the Third Reich. He explains that as the child of an intermarried couple, he and his elder sister Lili were categorised by the Nazi authorities as partial Jews in the first degree, and were treated as so-called 'full Jews'. He recounts how anti-Semitic measures and persecution gradually became more and more commonplace, leading to social isolation, his eventual exclusion from education and introduction into compulsory forced labour in the factories, from where he was arrested on the first day of the Factory Action. Initially detained in a detention centre in Reinickendorf, Hans recalls that he was transferred to Rosenstraße. It is here that he is reunited with his father, Emil. Whilst Hans' mother Clara joins in the protest, his sister Lili, as a nurse for the Jewish Community, tends to the deportees at the various detention centres across the city.

Gradually, the Rosenstraße detainees are released, Hans and his father amongst them. Upon their return home, however, they learn that Lili has died during an air raid several nights previously. The family are left no time to grieve with both father and son re-assigned to new forced labour positions. Hans is sent to work for Wählich, a building

²⁴⁹ Unless stated otherwise all pages references for Hans Grossmann's story are taken from the original 1990 edition.

company specialising in rubble clearance at bombsites across the city. Hans is astonished to meet Robert, a fellow Rosenstraße detainee, there. They rapidly strike up a friendship, which also brings Hans into ever closer contact with Robert's circle of friends, who themselves are either intermarried or so-called partial Jews. This group, he eventually learns, is also an active resistance network aiding the survival of Jews in the underground. Hans and his parents readily join, quickly becoming integral members, helping to hide the groups' funds, to provide food, and on occasion accommodation as well.

This involvement brings Hans into contact with a former school friend and partial Jew, David Hildesheim, who, the reader learns, has suffered a different fate. His mother had filed for divorce, meaning he and his father lost the protection the intermarriage had previously afforded them; they fled but had become separated. The group try to help David, providing him with shelter; first with the Grossmanns and later they hide him in a brothel on Alexanderplatz. When the latter is bombed David attempts to flee but is captured by the Gestapo. His arrest is witnessed by Hilde, the prostitute with whom he had been hiding. She seeks out the Grossmanns, informing them of David's capture and warning them that their own arrest may be imminent. The family flee and begin a life in illegality themselves, but they continue to work for the resistance.

However, only a short while later Hans and Emil are arrested whilst on their way to buying bread for the group. At the police station Emil immediately informs the desk officer that he and his son are Jews, whereupon the officer apologises and says that he has to inform the Gestapo. They are, however, afforded the opportunity to dispose of the money that would have linked them to the resistance group, flushing it down the toilet before the Gestapo arrives. Following their interrogation, Hans and Emil are transferred to the prison at Schulstraße, where they meet other Rosenstraße detainees, including those who had been deported to the work camp at Auschwitz and transferred back to Berlin two weeks later. As the war nears its end, however, Dobberke, the prison commandant, receives an order to execute prisoners. He is dissuaded from carrying out the order by Hans' father. Negotiating with Dobberke, Emil convinces him that his best option is to release all of the prisoners, which he duly does. Freed again, Hans and his father make their way across the city, past their former, now bomb-damaged home,

where they are reunited with Clara, who has taken refuge with her employers, the Hilperths. Together, united under one roof, the two families see out the end of the war.

iii) Style, Structure and Layout of Jochheim's Popular Histories

Originally written for teenagers and young adults, Jochheim's work centres on the fictional character of Hans Grossmann. It takes the form of a family narrative. This approach is particularly interesting as according to Anne Fuchs it enables an examination of the "intersection of the private and public, a site where official representations of the past are contested by alternative memories from below."²⁵⁰ In Jochheim's case, Hans Grossmann's story enables him to contest official representations of Jewish suffering, of solidarity and of resistance. At the same time the use of an autobiographical style in the narrative, heightens "reader expectations of autobiographical truth", suggesting that the work is authentic in spite of its acknowledged semi-fictional status.²⁵¹ We see this in Jochheim's explanation that: „Was Hans Grossmann erzählt, ist authentisch. Es gibt den Mann, der als Jugendlicher all das erlebt und meinen Schülern und mir erzählt hat" (p.10). This claim to authenticity not only validates the account as 'truthful' but also discourages the reader from reflecting on the constructed nature of the narrative and the influences upon it.

Employing a split narrator-focaliser technique, the story is built around the act of Hans relating his youth during the Third Reich, to an audience of school children. His narrative is separated into four main parts, each of which is then broken down again into a number of shorter sections. He contextualises everyday life for intermarried German-Jews and their families against the backdrop of Nazi ideology, he then proceeds to relate his experiences chronologically. The narrative is interspersed with a number of images, photographs and quotes. This fulfils several functions: it lends an overall textbook style to the layout, which reflects the original intended readership, whilst at the same time it projects notions of factuality and authenticity onto the text, in spite of the author's own acknowledgement that he created the characters independently (p.15).

²⁵⁰ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.4.

²⁵¹ Saynor, J., 2007. *Women without a Past? German Autobiographical Writings and Fascism*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, p.8.

Although Jochheim revises and extends the later editions of his work, Hans Grossmann's story, and the textbook style format are retained throughout, albeit with some modifications. In the 1993 edition, Hans Grossmann's story is preceded by a summary of the events based on secondary literature, autobiographies and historical fiction, a history of Rosenstraße since 1583, and a more detailed explanation of Jochheim's motivation in writing about the protest.²⁵² It is also followed by an account of what has subsequently happened to the street in the intervening fifty years, along with a summary of the attempts to commemorate the protest. In the 2002 edition, Hans Grossmann's story takes up the entire second half of the book. The first half is comprised once again of a summary of the events and the street in which they took place, but is also supported by a number of official documents, newspaper reports and eyewitness accounts. This is followed by a summary of this protest's commemoration, which includes three speeches from the 50th anniversary ceremony in 1993, details of the inauguration of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial in 1995, the unveiling of the commemorative plaque in 1998 and the installation of the Topography of Terror's permanent exhibition in 1999.²⁵³ I discuss these changes in greater detail later in this chapter.

Jochheim employs a number of techniques to engage the reader in Hans' story. These include intradiegetic narration, which creates the illusion of a transgenerational dialogue between the now elderly protagonist and his audience. This is heightened by the use of rhetorical questions, the aim of which is to help to draw the reader in, to provide a sense of involvement in the narrative. The narrator also relates and contrasts his experiences with those of his imaginary audience at the same age, again attempting to create a sense of interaction. Jochheim employs relatively short, straightforward sentences, both for the sake of simplicity, and to maintain a pace to the narrative, the aim of which is to allow the narrative's messages to be absorbed, the reader's attention retained. Lastly, he also highlights the interplay between the fictional events depicted and actual historical events, orientating the reader by alluding to noteworthy or

²⁵² As his sources, Jochheim cites the autobiographies of Ruth Andreas-Friedrich and Heinz Ullstein, Walter Lacquer's historical novel, Kurt Ball-Kaduri's essay and secondary literature by historians Kurt Pätzold and Erika Schwarz on the Wannsee Conference.

²⁵³ Other sources in the Topography's permanent exhibition, such as the *Schwarze Korps* editor's letter about the Factory Action to Dr Brandt, the head of the Burgstraße Gestapo, was reproduced in Jochheim's popular history (1990:120-122).

significant dates and events so as to heighten the sense of time and chronology, further creating a sense of authenticity.²⁵⁴

All of the above is further heightened by the visibility of the main characters in the story and the historical figures on whom they are based. Although he claims to have drawn the characters freely, Jochheim makes a point of stating that the character Hans and his experiences are based on the real life experiences of an individual, supplemented with the experiences of other eyewitnesses. Jochheim also names the individuals who provided testimony to him, and who influenced his narrative (pp.10-11). The eyewitnesses and their fictional alter-egos have become relatively identifiable, particularly following the publication of other representations, such as Nina Schröder's *Die Frauen der Rosenstraße: Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*.²⁵⁵ It is apparent that Hans Grossmann's story is based on the experiences of Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt, and likewise his family provides the template for the Grossmanns.²⁵⁶ The only exception is Hans' sister Lili. Whilst surviving eyewitnesses provide the background to the majority of the characters, Jochheim acknowledges that Lili is based on the diaries of an unknown nurse who worked for the Jewish Community and who was deported in summer 1943 (p.191). He created a sister for Hans in order that the family reflected a typical intermarried family at that time. The reader is deliberately made aware of the fact that all of the characters are drawn from reality. Thus, whilst Hans Grossmann's narrative is a work of fiction, the reader is aware of a close correlation to actual people and events, which affords the narrative both an assumed accuracy and a sense of authenticity.

²⁵⁴ These include the Boycott of Jewish businesses, the introduction of the Nuremberg Racial Laws in 1938, the introduction of the Star of David, the beginning of the deportations, the Wannsee Conference, Factory Action, the bombing campaign against German cities, the Normandy Landings, the 20th July Plot and lastly the Battle for Berlin.

²⁵⁵ Nina Schröder's work is the subject of the next chapter.

²⁵⁶ Other works such as Nathan Stoltzfus' *Resistance of the Heart* are also helpful in terms of helping to identify which characters have been based on which individual or individuals. The characters Robert and Sara, who we are introduced to later in the narrative, appear to be based on twins the Gad and Miriam Beck; Clara Grossmann, Hans' mother, for example, appears to be based on a combination of Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt's own mother Hanna, and fellow protester Charlotte Israel. We can also see a parallel between Hanna Löwenstein de Witt, Jochheim's character Clara Grossmann and the character Lena Fischer in Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* (2003) analysed in Chapter 5.

iv) On the Function of Photographs and Excerpts within the narrative

As I have already suggested, the use of photographs, images and text excerpts in Jochheim's work helps to replicate the textbook style format, which would be readily identifiable to Jochheim's original target audience of teenagers and young adults. The number of photographs and excerpts used varies across the three editions.²⁵⁷ Their inclusion however, is important.²⁵⁸ As I argue in what follows, they serve to authenticate the narrative, and to engender an imaginative investment, which creates an emotional identification with the protagonist. Whilst these functions can be seen as distinct from one another, I illustrate that they are also related.

Much has already been written on the nature of photography and its usage in cultural memory. According to Roland Barthes the photograph has multiple functions, namely to inform, represent, surprise, signify and or provoke desire.²⁵⁹ It attests to "what has been", possessing an "evidential force" in which "the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation."²⁶⁰ For Barthes photography provided snapshots of fixed moments in time, verifying the reality of their existence. Yet, although photography may offer an 'evidential force' that captures fixed moments in time, it does not automatically follow that photographs are entirely evidentiary, and always ratify what the viewer sees. Alan Trachtenberg remarks on the fact that whilst a photograph may not be false, the implied story about what is shown in the image can be.²⁶¹ Hence, they can also be adopted to make false claims to authenticity, in which the viewer thinks he or she sees one thing when in fact they are gazing at something else; this is something we see in Nina Schröder's biography in Chapter 4. In his article on W.G. Sebald's *Die Ausgewanderten* JJ Long suggests, "photographs in themselves contain no hint of how

²⁵⁷ In the 1990 edition 17 photographs and images were used, along with 41 textual extracts, in the 1993 edition 30 photographs and images were used, along with 43 extracts, and lastly in the 2002 edition 35 photographs and images were used along with 59 extracts. The increase in the latest edition reflects the changes to the popular history with the inclusion of additional sections.

²⁵⁸ Some photographs have become iconic in their own right, such as Abraham Pisarek's (himself an intermarried Jew and later Rosenstraße detainee), photograph of the Jewish Community Building in Rosenstraße, an image taken during the 1930s as part of Pisarek's collection documenting Jewish sites across Berlin. Yet, the photograph, having been replicated so many times in Jochheim's work as well as in other representations, has come to signify a site of detention and a site of resistance, a visual reminder of what can no longer be seen.

²⁵⁹ Barthes, R., 1993. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. London: Vintage, p.27.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p.85 and p.89.

²⁶¹ Trachtenberg, A., 2008. 'Through a Glass, Darkly: Photography and Cultural Memory'. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, Vol 25:1, pp.111-132, here p.112.

they are to be read,” they are in effect meaningless.²⁶² They only derive meaning through reference to language. The visual image is inextricably bound with language; how a photograph is framed by the text it is contained within is therefore responsible for its meaning.²⁶³ Hence, we understand that the key word here is context. How a photograph or set of images is interpreted is entirely dependent on the context in which they are used. The questions we therefore need to ask are how photographs are used in Jochheim’s popular histories, to what ends and why?

Jochheim’s use of photographs, I suggest, follows Barthes analogy, in so far as they are used in an evidentiary manner. When placed in the context of the narrative the photographs inform and also seem to authenticate the narrative. They help to evoke a sense of factuality into the semi-fictional narrative. Hans Grossmann’s story appears more real precisely because of the images to real events and people that are interspersed throughout it. Moreover, they provide the evidential force which reinforces the narrative. Again a comparison with Sebald’s work is useful here. Stefanie Harris has argued that Sebald used photographs “to give evidence of that which can no longer be seen,” and to “provide an image of a past that has been cleared away or covered up.”²⁶⁴ Jochheim uses photographs in much the same way, as evidence of a past that can no longer be seen, but its existence can be ratified by the photographic evidence. Placed within the narrative of discrimination and increasing persecution, their meaning and documentary function become clear. For example, Jochheim’s inclusion of photographs of the busy Grenadierstraße near Alexanderplatz provide evidence of the daily life that once existed in this largely Jewish area of Berlin, simultaneously reminding the reader that it is no more. The positioning of each image is significant in so far as it reinforces a sense of reality in the narrative. Each of the photographs corresponds to a real, lived experience or person; the inclusion of images of everyday life, of individuals and groups, of places, ratifies their prior existence whilst drawing attention to their absence in the present.

²⁶² Long, J.J., 2003. ‘History, Narrative and Photography in W.G. Sebald’s *Die Ausgewanderten*’. *Modern Languages Review* 98:1, pp.117-137, here p. 120. He was building on the work of Clive Scott whose 1999 book argued that photographs lacked any intentionality.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.120.

²⁶⁴ Harris, S., 2001. ‘The Return of the Dead: Memory and Photography in W.G. Sebald’s *Die Ausgewanderten*’. *The German Quarterly* 74:4, pp. 379-391, here p.385.

The documentary function of the photographs within the narrative is also reinforced by the absence of any images of individual characters within the narrative, particularly of the protagonist Hans. Even though each character is based on one or more historical figures, Jochheim makes no attempt to depict them visually or indeed through descriptive language. He does this precisely because the characters are fictional. To provide a visual image of them, even in the form of a photograph of their real-life counterpart, would undermine their evidentiary function, as the witness and the character are not one and the same. If one photograph were seen as inauthentic, ratifying something as one thing when it is another, then consequently this would undermine the function of all of the photographs. Hence Jochheim intentionally distinguishes between the character he created and the man who was the inspiration for him.²⁶⁵ He offers no image of Hans Grossmann, simply because he never existed, and he cannot therefore be ratified.

This absence of images also helps to illustrate the other and arguably related function of photographs within the narrative. Without any verifiable image, the reader is left to imagine the characters for him or herself. In so doing the reader may identify more closely with the ideas and values of the characters as they have imagined them to be. Yet, even where Jochheim has included photographs the idea of the reader's imaginative investment still holds. Marianne Hirsch has argued that photographs generate a 'memorial aesthetic'. According to Hirsch the reader participates "in a cultural act of remembrance" through the act of looking at the photograph and contemplating, and reflecting on what they see.²⁶⁶ Through this process of contemplation that the viewer may become involved with the narrative, engaging and identifying with its protagonists as well as the ideas and values it foregrounds. The events Jochheim relates are at once verifiable through the use of photographs, but they are also re-imagined from the reader's perspective. They are simultaneously real and imagined. Take for example the aforementioned street scene at Grenadierstraße – its

²⁶⁵ Notably in the third edition of his popular history Jochheim did include a photograph of Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt, alongside Rita Süßmuth, the then President of the Bundestag, and Ignatz Bubis, the leader of the Jewish Community, taken in 1998 at the unveiling of the commemorative plaque in Rosenstraße. However, this photograph was clearly framed by its context and positioning within the narrative, which focused on the different forms of commemoration.

²⁶⁶ Hirsch, M., 1999. 'Projected Memory: Holocaust Photographs in Public and Personal Fantasy'. In: M. Bal, J. Crewe and L. Spitzer, eds. *Acts of Memory. Cultural Recall in the Present*. Hanover and London: Dartmouth College University Press of New England, pp.5-7.

reality is reinforced through the photographic image, but the reader may imagine Hans walking along that street. We can see that photographs serve a dual function verifying and reinforcing the narrative, whilst enabling identification and emotional investment in it.

With a few exceptions, the images used in the 1990 edition were not changed, although they were supplemented by additional photographs and images.²⁶⁷ Alongside the photographic images, Jochheim's inclusion of a variety of textual excerpts from literature, schoolbooks, the press, Nazi speeches and official memoranda and documentation also functions in the same way as the photographs – ratifying, introducing the idea of factuality whilst inviting the reader to consider how the protagonists may have responded to, or felt about them. We see this, for example, in Jochheim's inclusion of the notice announcing the executions of members of the Herbert Baum Group. It is a historically verifiable event and one that the reader is invited to imagine the protagonist in relation to. It is a point we will come back to. Having outlined the importance of photographic images and excerpts, let us now turn our attention to the analysis of the key themes.

v) Thematic Analysis of Hans Grossmann's story

The themes that emerge in Hans Grossmann's story are particularly pertinent to the time in which the narrative was originally written. If we consider the socio-political and cultural discourses that were prominent at the beginning of the decade, the key themes in Jochheim's narrative provide an insight into patterns of remembering and identity, and also into how these have changed over the course of time. As I shall demonstrate in what is to come, Jochheim's narrative prioritises the Jewish experience of the Third Reich. The focus is fitting with broader cultural trends. As I have already argued earlier in this thesis the paradigm shift in cultural memory trends after 1979 resulted in an increased interest in the German-Jewish past and in the Holocaust. This shift in cultural

²⁶⁷ The image of children at a Jewish school in 1935 (1990:27) has been replaced with another image from the Jewish school at Rykestraße in 1936 (1993:42), but has been removed from the 2002 edition. Similarly the image of a deportation which accompanies Jochheim's description of the Wannsee Conference (1990:94; 1993:96) has been substituted with an image of the villa in which the conference was held (2002:154). Along with photographs of the different memorials, for example, Jochheim includes in his 2002 edition a photograph of Karol Broniatowski's memorial to Berlin Jews at Grunewald Station.

memory, I suggest, has influenced Jochheim, hence his prioritisation of the Jewish perspective of life and survival during the Third Reich. Equally, the desire to draw a line under the Nazi past during the 1980s may also be considered an influential factor. This illustrates that remembering the Rosenstraße protest is underpinned by the competing, and conflicting desires of normalization, in accordance with Taberner's definition, versus the desire to maintain a critical interpretation of the past, which retains a sense of accountability.

In addition, Hans Grossmann's story also ties in with dominant issues of identity, in the conceptions of 'self' and 'other' that we find throughout the narrative. We find references to the crisis of identity that resulted from the collapse of the former GDR. Katharina Ochse has argued that notions of the 'self' had been defined in opposition to Germans on the other side of the Iron Curtain, and that after its collapse Germans needed to find a new defining 'other'. West Germans in particular, Ochse argued, turned their attention towards their previous defining 'other': the Jew. However, she suggests that this time they did so differently, showing a tendency to conceptualise "Jews as fighters rather than defenceless victims."²⁶⁸ At the same time, she suggested that this also converged with Jewish Germans' desire for self-affirmation. This resulted from the desire for a positive sense of identity on the one hand, and a fear of extreme nationalism on the other hand, that was further heightened by the resurgence in anti-Semitism in the early 1990s.²⁶⁹ Ochse argued that whilst Germans no longer wanted to see themselves solely as the victimizer, Jewish Germans, particularly the younger generation, no longer wished to see themselves in the role of the passive victim, and sought instead to identify with positive examples from the past, which included the protest in Rosenstraße.²⁷⁰ Hans Grossmann's story conceives of Jewish and non-Jewish identity constructions along similar lines to those above that Ochse has identified.

Jochheim's text re-imagines a positive German-Jewish relationship that alludes to the German-Jewish symbiosis. He creates assertive Jewish figures that fought for survival and were aided by non-Jewish Germans in that process. Hans Grossmann's story

²⁶⁸ Ochse, K., 1994. "“What Could Be More Fruitful, More Healing, More Purifying?” Representations of Jews in the German Media after 1989". In: S.L. Gilman and K. Remmler, eds. *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany. Life and Literature since 1989*. New York: New York University Press, pp.113-129, here p.114 and p.116.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p.116 and p.124.

provides an empathetic re-assessment of German behaviour during the Third Reich, in which Jochheim suggests that Germans who associated with the regime were misguided rather than culpable, and moreover they had been punished. At the same time, Jochheim suggests the that continued existence of unity between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans that transcended and outlasted the regime. It is on the basis of this solidarity, of the mutual suffering, he suggests that a positive German-Jewish relationship can be built. This we see as a reflection of the desire for a positive, harmonious German-Jewish relationship, one which encapsulates the hopes but also the fear of a recurrence of the past.

vi) Forms and Function of Anti-Semitism in Hans Grossmann's story

If we draw a comparison with Inge Scholl's *Die Weiße Rose*, which Katie Rickard suggests was written as an educational tool, it is possible, given his original intended readership of teenagers and young adults, who were coming of age at the time of unification, coupled with his career in education, to see a pedagogic imperative behind Jochheim's text as well.²⁷¹ This is apparent in the way the narrator interweaves his experiences with contemporary issues in an attempt to render their origins and their significance understandable to the reader. Central to this is the theme of anti-Semitism, with which Jochheim begins his narrative. Even though Germany had officially adopted a position of philo-Semitism, anti-Semitism nevertheless remained and was heightened in the wake of unification.²⁷² Arguably this imbued the Rosenstraße protest with a new significance, and may help to explain why, around its 50th anniversary, it resonated greatly with the wider public.

The opening passages of Hans Grossmann's story explain the origins and forms of Nazi anti-Semitism, depicting it as the extreme manifestation of pre-existing anti-Semitism in German society, upon which the regime built. Jochheim's use of quotes and extracts reinforce the reality that anti-Semitism had been socially acceptable, even before the Nazis came to power, albeit not to the same extreme. Hans explains:

²⁷¹ Rickard, 'Remembering the Weiße Rose: Myth Memory and National Identity', pp.77-78.

²⁷² Fulbrook, *German National Identity after the Holocaust*, p.233; Ochse, "'What Could Be More Fruitful...'" pp.113-129; Benz, W., 2002. 'Jewish Existence in Germany from the Perspective of the Non-Jewish Majority. Daily Life between Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism'. In: L. Morris, and J. Zipes, eds. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis 1945-2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp.101-117.

Was die Maßnahmen der Nazi-Regierung gegen die Juden betraf, so ist es sicher auch so gewesen, daß die meisten Deutschen – genauer: die meisten der anderen Deutschen, denn wir Juden waren auch Deutsche –, nichts gegen diese antijüdische Politik hatten. Selbstverständlich wollten nicht alle, daß die Juden umgebracht würden. Aber viele, sehr viele waren eben stillschweigend oder auch ganz offen damit einverstanden, daß die Juden gesellschaftlich und wirtschaftlich geächtet wurden (pp.31-32).

Having thus established something of an apologist position on German anti-Semitism, Hans then takes the reader on a journey backwards and forwards in time from the Nazi period, to events in the early 20th century, which are seen as contributory factors to the evolution of anti-Semitism in twentieth century Germany, and from there across the millennia to the beginning of Christianity. Hans is able to suggest that, as Christianity developed from Judaism, the origins of anti-Semitism can also be traced back to, and are rooted in it (pp.14-45).²⁷³ Although the explanation is both highly simplified and generalised, for the purposes of narrative structure this approach enables Jochheim to break down the complexities of anti-Semitism into easy to follow stages, further emphasising to the reader that it is far from a new or isolated phenomenon, but one that also fails to recognise the theological similarities that bind Jews and Christians.²⁷⁴ By equating religions in this way, Jochheim indicates that there is more that unites than divides world religions and that accordingly unity and togetherness should be embraced.

In Hans Grossmann's story anti-Semitism takes two principle, revealing forms. There is the extreme anti-Semitism of the Nazis on the one hand, and the pre-existing anti-Semitism perpetuated by noted individuals, on the other. This is relayed to the reader in two different ways. Firstly in Jochheim's use of the aforementioned quotes and extracts from literature, newspapers and speeches. Secondly, it is also apparent in the descriptions of Clara Grossmann's family, and in their response to her marriage in 1920. This approach serves the purpose of illustrating how and why anti-Semitism was

²⁷³ This allows for a less confrontational approach but at the expense of sidelining issues of guilt and complicity.

²⁷⁴ It also reflects an archetypal school history lesson, breaking a subject down to explain cause and effect of a phenomenon, rendering the format recognisable to its intended audience. Jochheim suggests there are comparisons between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. How Islam fits into the narrative is unclear, and it is not mentioned again after this point.

ingrained within German society, and its influence on perceptions of 'self' and 'other'. Describing his family background, Hans explains:

In der Familie meiner Mutter aber gab es einen großen Krach, als die Tochter Clara einen Juden heiraten wollte. Ihr Vater war deutschnational eingestellt. Er sah die Juden schon damals als Feinde an und bekannte sich offen zu seinem Antisemitismus. Ich habe ihn und auch seine Frau nie kennengelernt. Denn nach ihrer Heirat mit einem Juden haben die Großeltern zu meiner Mutter alle Kontakte abgebrochen (p.28).

The function of anti-Semitism and its different forms in the narrative are as significant as they are illuminating. Hans' narrative does not simply explain how and why anti-Semitism was prominent in German society but also undermines it as a concept in the process of that explanation. By showing how it was once socially acceptable, Jochheim is able to suggest to his reader that it could become so once again, unless confronted and challenged. The fact that in the early 1990s anti-Semitism appeared to be on the increase, or at least, had become acceptable in polite society according to Ignatz Bubis, would suggest such concerns were well anticipated by Jochheim.²⁷⁵ Not only does he discourage his reader from identifying with anti-Semitic ideas, he also suggests that anti-Semitism may be overcome in the present by facing up to the past, and most of all by promoting a positive German-Jewish relationship predicated on a past example of unity and solidarity. This results in an allusion to the German-Jewish symbiosis, and to the existence of an 'other Germany' distinct from the Third Reich.²⁷⁶

vii) Reconfigurations of German-Jewish Identity

The rise in contemporary anti-Semitism may have fuelled fears of a recurrence of the past. However, Ochse suggests it also had a further consequence, namely that Jewish Germans refused to see themselves as victims.²⁷⁷ As a consequence, she argues a trend

²⁷⁵ Ochse, "“What Could Be More Fruitful...”" p. 116.

²⁷⁶ Stuart Taberner similarly argues that von Trotta's film *Rosenstraße* alludes to an assimilationist German-Jewish symbiosis. See his: 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film', pp. 357-372. Karen Remmler also discusses the reappearance of the German-Jewish symbiosis. Remmler, K., 2002. 'Encounters Across the Void: Rethinking Approaches to German-Jewish Symbioses'. In: L. Morris and J. Zipes, eds. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis 1945-2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp.3-30.

²⁷⁷ Ochse, "“What Could Be More Fruitful...”", p.116 and pp.123-124.

emerged whereby German Jews had begun to be identified as fighters, as resisters rather than defenceless victims in an attempt to build Jewish self-confidence, noting how non-Jewish Germans also appeared willing to embrace this idea.²⁷⁸ This pattern also recurs in Hans Grossmann's story, as we now see, illustrating the way identity discourses have informed the early cultural memories of the Rosenstraße protest. In what follows I argue that conceptions of Jewishness are derived from the convergence of contemporary desires over Jewish and non-Jewish German identity, and that the re-configurations of Jewish identity facilitate re-configurations of German (non-Jewish) identity as its 'other'.

Jochheim's narrative is constructed in such a way that the image of the Jewish figure as a fighter, a resister of Nazi oppression, remains uppermost in the reader's mind, marking a departure from earlier conceptions of the Jewish German as a passive victim. This image can be found in three different, interrelated forms. Firstly, Jochheim refers to semi-fictionalised examples of Jewish resistance from within the concentration camps, showing how resistance continued rather than ceased following deportation. Secondly, he weaves examples of historically verifiable figures, and events into the narrative. This sets the tone for the narrative. All such examples of resistance precede the Factory Action, suggesting they serve the purpose of illustrating the diversity of Jewish resistance. Lastly, Jochheim focuses individual characters that are drawn into resistance as part of an organised group, and on their own account at the level of the individual and subsequently at the level of the collective. With each example, the diversity of resistance is illustrated and the image of the Jewish fighter is reinforced. As the narrative progresses, the response of the Jewish figure to the threat they are faced with increases proportionately until such a point as the Jewish fighter figure vanquishes the Nazi freeing himself and other German Jews.

If we turn our focus to the first form, we find the example of the semi-fictional character, Berlin flautist Tamara Berger, who in all likelihood Jochheim based on the German-Jewish recorder and piccolo player Karla Wagenberg.²⁷⁹ In Hans Grossmann's

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p.116.

²⁷⁹ Jochheim's description of Tamara Berger's resistance replicates, almost word for word, Gad Beck's description of his friend Karla Wagenberg in his autobiography. See: Beck, G., and Heibert, F., 2012 *Und Gad ging zu David. Erinnerungen 1923 bis 1945*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Edition dia. Kindle Edition, Location 1760. Beck was also amongst the eyewitnesses Jochheim spoke to, and on whom he based the character Robert Bauer in the narrative.

story, Tamara is significant because she contradicts the image of the passive Jew, showing that even deportees continued to fight. Once a member of a Berlin resistance group she, like Karla, survives in no small part because she became part of the women's camp orchestra.²⁸⁰ Yet, even whilst incarcerated she found the means to continue fighting. According to Hans, she had a coded letter smuggled out of the camp and sent to contacts in Berlin. The letter detailed life in the camp, directly contradicting the regime's propaganda, so that others would be forewarned and could have the opportunity to flee (pp.84-86). Tamara is a positive figure in the narrative, who fits with the prevailing conceptions of the Jew as a fighter. She is both strongly, morally-minded – as seen in her decision to face deportation rather than expose others to the risk of hiding her in the underground – but also an intelligent humanist who finds a way to communicate the truth about life in the camp so that others may be spared. Moreover, she is also a successful figure who survives. Mention of her resistance features relatively early in the narrative, setting the tone, so that the reader knows that this will be a narrative about Jewish resistance rather than passivity.

Images of individual Jewish fighters are incorporated to lead into and complement larger scale acts of opposition, and the idea of an 'other Germany'. The fact that Jochheim opts to focus on historically verifiable events has the effect of heightening a sense of reality, blurring the boundaries between the lived experience and the imagined. Jochheim dedicates several pages to the Herbert Baum resistance group, known mostly for their attack on the anti-Soviet exhibition *Das Sowjetparadies*.²⁸¹ Jochheim claims that this attack was designed to send a message that German Jews should oppose deportation more strongly (p.103). It was also only one of many activities, which included the production and distribution of anti-Nazi pamphlets as well as aiding German Jews to flee in order to evade deportation (pp.101-104). Although Jochheim acknowledges that the core members of the group did not survive they nevertheless serve as positive figures that further reinforce the image of Jewish fighters. Moreover, it is implied that they also inspire Hans. As he emerges from his imprisonment in

²⁸⁰ According to Beck Wagenberg acted out of sisterly solidarity, knowing that her sister would be unable to cope with a life living in illegality but that she did not want to be separated from her, she decided they would face deportation together. Ibid.

²⁸¹ The group was commemorated in the GDR in 1981, with a memorial in the Berliner Lustgarten, the site of the group's arson attack on the *Sowjet Paradies* exhibition in 1942. The memorial was updated in 2001. Jordan, J.A., 2006. *Structures of Memory. Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.73-75.

Rosenstraße, Hans sees an announcement posted on the nearby advertising column, stating that the members of the Herbert Baum Gruppe had been executed (pp.142-143). Juxtaposing this death notification with the release of the detainees is important. It serves as a reminder that the threat towards Jewish Germans had not diminished. Yet, it is also significant for Hans personally as it demarcates the period between his passivity and his own transition into a Jewish fighter, a member of the underground resistance.

Following the Factory Action and protest in Rosenstraße Jochheim focuses on the characters' resistance as part of an organised group. This in turn leads to individual resistance for the sake of the family and subsequently for the sake of the collective. The reader is introduced to the character Robert Bauer, a partial-Jew and member of the underground resistance *Gruppe Samuel*.²⁸² He befriends Hans and gradually integrates him and his parents into the organisation. They quickly become key members of the group becoming involved with all aspects of their activities, from finding shelter, falsifying documents, up to and including helping individuals flee Germany. Even the group's charges are shown to be more than passive figures. David Hildesheim, for example, turns to the group for help but only after a considerable amount of time. Similarly, when the Grossmanns are forced to flee into illegality themselves, their resistance continues nevertheless. Jochheim re-imagines this resistance as a site of unity between non-Jewish and Jewish Germans, but we note that all resistance is driven by the Jewish characters, who are aided by their non-Jewish relatives and acquaintances, thus allowing Jochheim to continue to build on the idea of the Jewish fighter.

Jewish identity, however, is most strikingly re-configured in the character Emil Grossmann. He provides an image of a fighter who is fearless and who uses his intelligence to resist the regime at the level of the individual, as well as at the level of the collective. Although he becomes a key member of *Gruppe Samuel*, it is after he and Hans are arrested that he comes to the fore. He is fearless upon his arrest, readily acknowledging his Jewish status rather than waiting for it to be discovered, a tactic which also has the effect of deflecting attention away from their resistance activities. He is also quick-witted in the interrogation. In an attempt to dissuade the Gestapo from

²⁸² The group is based closely on the Jewish resistance group *Chug Chaluzi* founded by Jizchak Schwarsenz, to which Gad Beck, on whom the character Robert Bauer is based, and later Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt also belonged.

searching for Clara, he claims that she had already abandoned them (pp.175-178).²⁸³ His defining act, however, comes at the end of the story. In the closing days of the war, Emil effectively rescues hundreds of Berlin Jews. When the prisoners are ordered to assemble in the courtyard, it becomes clear that the guards have been given the order to shoot them. However, Emil again appears fearless. He steps forward, joined by two fellow prisoners, and confronts Commandant Dobberke. Through his negotiating skills and his courage, he persuades him to set them free, thus saving countless lives. Through his numerous actions Emil reinforces the notion of the defiant Jewish fighter.

Through the varying images of the Jewish fighter, Jochheim's text reflects shifting patterns of Jewish identity in Germany during and following the *Wende*. Just as notions of the Jewish self have shifted away in this period from the idea of the passive victim towards the resister, Hans too makes this same transition. The majority, although not all of the Jewish characters in the text, are defiant and strong, in line with the Jewish desire for self-affirmation, as identified by Ochse. Jochheim allows a minority of characters to be less defiant. The example of Herr Levin, Hans' teacher, is a case in point. He remains strong for his pupils up until the point where he is to be deported (p.68). Yet, even here, although Herr Levin is a victim, he is not entirely passive. He opts to take his own life, rather than accept the regime's plans. However, we also note that these characters appear only up to mid-way through the narrative. As it reaches its conclusion, the level of Jewish opposition and defiance steadily increases thus also offsetting the image of passive victimhood to the extent that it is the affirmative image of the Jewish fighter that remains uppermost in the reader's mind. Hans Grossmann's story, it appears, has been influenced by, and also reflects the desire for a stronger, more positive sense of identity amongst Jewish Germans at the beginning of the 1990s, as they too sought to question and redefine their identity following unification.

Jochheim's prioritisation of the defiant Jewish fighter figure is also significant for what it indicates about German, non-Jewish self-perception at the same point in time. Whilst we recognise that Hans Grossmann's story is narrated from the perspective of a so-called partial Jew, and is based on the testimonies of Jewish victims, we also need to

²⁸³ Emil suggests that Clara had fled to Sweden in the hope that the Gestapo would not attempt to find her. A similar pattern occurs later in Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* when Miriam Süßmann suggests her daughter Ruth is not in Berlin but living in the Rhineland with an aunt, again in the hope that the Gestapo will not search for her.

recognise that the text has been constructed by a non-Jewish German, whose own perceptions, interests and influences inevitably filter into and help to shape the narrative.²⁸⁴ Following Ochse's analogy, we can see that the way Jewishness is configured in this narrative helps to illuminate German conceptions of the 'self' with the Jew as its 'other'. The way Jochheim has re-imagined Jewish figures also points to the influences on conceptions of German identity. Specifically, it seems that if the Jew was no longer seen solely as the victim, then it followed that the German no longer needed to be seen exclusively in the role of the victimizer.²⁸⁵ Consequently, Jochheim divides perpetrators into two categories, namely committed ideologues who carry out the regime's policies on the one hand, and lesser characters on the other hand, who, through their own prejudices and petty-mindedness facilitate the regime. In addition, Jochheim also touches upon the theme of the Jewish „Greifer“ who, exploited by the Gestapo for their own ends, also inevitably blur the boundaries between a strict perpetrator-victim dichotomy, allowing the author to deflect attention away from the German as the sole victimizer. This, as I demonstrate in the following section, points to the prevalence of a desire amongst non-Jewish Germans for a more differentiated identity, that moved beyond the dichotomy of the Jew as victim and the German as perpetrator, and which was particularly prevalent following unification.²⁸⁶

viii) Perpetrators, Culpability and Punishment in Hans Grossmann's story

Throughout the narrative the figure of the Nazi is omnipresent. Distinguishing between different types of perpetrators Jochheim focuses attention primarily on recognisable, high-ranking members of the Nazi Party. Their representation in the narrative is again heightened through the use of extracts from speeches, publications and also images from the period. The figure of the Nazi is visually reinforced throughout, making him ever present in the reader's consciousness, as an ominous, threatening spectre and as the antithesis of the central protagonist. By contrast, however, as I have already

²⁸⁴ This is also evident in the significance attached to place in the narrative. With the notable exception of the protest much of the narrative takes place West Berlin, with significant turning points in the narrative taking place in or near well known locations, such as the KaDeWe. When the Grossmanns flee they hide in Lankwitz in the south-western Berlin, in the former American sector, rather than in Potsdam, as Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt did, suggesting the story was written with West German school pupils in mind, plotting the narrative around locations familiar to them.

²⁸⁵ Ochse, "What Could Be More Fruitful..." p.116.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.120. Ochse suggests the wish to break free from this pattern is indicated in the concomitant interest in Jewish culture.

indicated, Hans is not represented visually once, reflecting the ghosting presence of the Jew in post-war German discourses, leaving the reader free to imagine him as they choose.²⁸⁷ Similarly, the low-ranking Nazis, the ordinary Germans, who also feature in the narrative, are not represented visually, so as to suggest that they could have been anyone; he perhaps deliberately allows the reader to feel uncomfortable in order to reinforce this point. Jochheim draws several of the perpetrators directly into the narrative, acquainting his readers with Alois Brunner, Adolf Eichmann and his adjutant, and later Dobberke. Their inhumanity is made apparent from their first introduction, in a scene in which the Jewish Community staff, Hans' sister Lili included, are forced to assemble, standing under guard for four hours before three SS officers – identified as Brunner, Eichmann, and his adjutant – enter the scene, and select individuals for deportation. The brutality of the action is juxtaposed with the informality and manner in which the three first arrive.

Da kamen drei hohe SS-Offiziere herein. Lächelnd. Rauchend. In angeregter Unterhaltung. Sie erschienen mir unglaublich jung. Einer – das dachte ich mir gleich – war Adolf Eichmann, ein anderer sein Stellvertreter Günther. Die beiden haben nichts gesagt. Das Wort führte der Dritte. Ein Österreicher. Er ließ sich die Listen des Personals geben. Dann erteilte er den Abteilungsleitern den Auftrag, sie sollten aus ihren Abteilungen alle entbehrlichen Personen benennen. Zum Abtransport! [...] Denn als die Abteilungsleiter zögerten und es dem SS-Offizier zu langsam ging, griff er ein und bestimmte wahllos 200 der Anwesenden (p.107).

Brunner's inhumanity is further reinforced in the following passages, in which the reader learns that he sought reprisals for the deportees who had fled into hiding, ordering the Jewish Community staff to assemble once again. Brunner then calls out each member of staff individually, randomly assigns them to one of two groups. Eventually one group is sent back to work whilst the other is marked down for deportation (p.109). The reader is left in no doubt of their specific responsibility for the Holocaust (pp.113-114). Focusing on key figures enables Jochheim to deflect attention away from the ordinary German, however, by placing the culpability onto the elite minority. Jochheim is particularly disparaging of the way in which Brunner, unlike the

²⁸⁷ The only time Hans Oskar Löwenstein de Witt is actually seen in Jochheim's popular history is in the 2002 edition at the ceremony to mark the unveiling of the commemorative plaque in 1998.

others, has been able to evade justice, noting how, at the time of writing, he was living under the protection of the Syrian regime. Brunner fled the Federal Republic in 1954 after nine years of living under a pseudonym.

The injustice of Brunner's lifelong evasion from punishment, however, also serves as a contrast to other perpetrators that feature in the narrative, serving to throw the image of the lower-ranking Nazi functionary into sharp relief. Jochheim draws attention to a number of other perpetrators who participated in the everyday persecution of German Jews. Examples include the grammar school headmaster (p.22), the factory foreman (p.89), and the Grossmanns' neighbours, the Kalinskis. Jochheim's representation of the everyday perpetrator is both ambiguous and problematic, not least because it downplays their role, and projects responsibility back onto the elite. Principal amongst this group are the aforementioned Kalinskis. Herr Kalinski is the apartment building's caretaker, and the *Blockwart*, a party-affiliated functionary whose role, ostensibly, was to ensure that the regime's rules and regulations were adhered to, yet in reality meant observing and informing on the residents, facilitating persecution at an everyday level (pp.67-68).

The reader is left in no doubt that the Kalinskis are unsympathetic characters, petty and small-minded, whose blind adherence to Nazi ideology allows them to feel superior and justified. The fact that their four sons each joined the SS further reinforces their sense of superiority. Hans recounts how both Herr and Frau Kalinski take pleasure in petty harassment. Yet, however despicable their character, they are only ever seen as inconsequential, if vindictive, regime facilitators at most, but also distinct from the high-ranking Nazis who carry out the deportations. In a parallel with Brunner, the Kalinski's escape legal justice for their actions, but in another sense the reader learns, they do not go unpunished. Of their four sons, as Hans recollects, at least three are killed, thus evoking a parallel with the Old Testament's Book of Deuteronomy, suggesting the sons died so as to atone for their parents' sins. Jochheim implies therefore that ordinary Germans may be redeemed, or at least considered more empathetically.

In addition, Jochheim's representation of everyday perpetrators also presents questions of individual culpability, social class and intelligence, which are nevertheless

problematic in their construction and implications. The Kalinskis are shown to be unsympathetic characters, opportunists seeking to gain social standing through their party allegiance, but they are also resolutely working class, neither well educated nor particularly intelligent, and thus, Jochheim implies, susceptible to Nazi ideology.²⁸⁸ Jochheim suggests that the Kalinskis, motivated by personal ambition, were effectively duped by the regime's ideology.

Am Beispiel von Blockwart Kalinski und seiner Frau kann man gut erkennen, welche Bedeutung die Judenfeindschaft für viele Menschen hatte. Sie konnten sich nämlich leicht einbilden, etwas Besseres zu sein und mit Leuten auf einer Stufe zu stehen, die in Wirklichkeit eine ganz andere berufliche und gesellschaftliche Stellung hatten und die ihrerseits sicher auch nicht meinten, mit einem Blockwart etwas gemeinsam zu haben. Und bei dieser Einbildung war es auch im Grunde unmöglich, sich zu irren. Denn die Propaganda der Nazis sagte es ihnen tagtäglich: 'Ihr seid keine Juden! Ihr seid ganz großartig! Ihr seid Arier! Herrenmenschen!' Da konnte man natürlich nicht auf die Idee kommen, wie erbärmlich es ist, wenn das Selbstwertgefühl eines Menschen darauf beruht, zu einer Gruppe von Menschen zu gehören, die angeblich charakterlich besser sein soll als irgendeine andere Gruppe (p.67).

Whilst Jochheim's representation of the Kalinskis is negative, suggesting they were motivated by desires for social mobility above their station, that they were foolish, he also explains their behaviour by emphasising how the regime's propaganda reinforced and encouraged their point of view. This seemingly also scapegoats the working classes and poorly educated. It is they who are followers of Nazism in Hans Grossmann's story; in the end the more educated of the characters turn their backs on the regime but the working classes, the Kalinskis, do not. Furthermore it allows the reader to forget the extent to which Nazism was endemic across all sections of society irrespective of class or education, and that Germans weren't simply misled rather many believed in Nazism. Worryingly it also constructs negative associations of ordinary Germans with the regime around contemporary prejudices of class and education. It is the working classes, perhaps also in an indirect reference to the GDR, who are identified as Nazism's fellow travellers.

²⁸⁸ The subtle message in this may be that education can prevent the reader from similarly becoming susceptible to extremism, and thus further reflects Jochheim's influence as a teacher and supporter of non-violent action.

The trend of absolving the everyday perpetrator is apparent elsewhere in the narrative as well, for example, in Hans' reference to the lost generation, the young men who had fought in the First World War, and then returned home to face unemployment, social unrest, and later economic depression. "Viele von ihnen fanden erst in den Schlägertrupps der Nazis wieder eine Heimat" (p.28), Hans explains. Following this pattern, Jochheim's narrative also seeks to deflect culpability away from everyday figures whose actions directly contribute to Jewish suffering. He absolves Frau Hildesheim, David's mother, from her responsibility in abandoning her husband and son, claiming that:

Die Mutter hat die Nerven verloren und ist abgehauen. Die Gestapo hatte das sofort spitzbekommen und wollte beide nach Theresienstadt deportieren (p.166).

Frau Hildesheim's actions aren't condemned. Instead she is pitied and, the situation described as "ganz traurig". Her culpability is projected solely onto the Gestapo, allowing her to be absolved of guilt; her indirect complicity with the regime is not explored. Absolving intermarried spouses of individual culpability in this way, established a pattern that has been repeated, albeit with some degree of variation, in later historical as well as filmic representations.²⁸⁹ In this context everyday perpetration is presented as a tragic consequence of events to which Germans have been subjected. Their actions are rendered more comprehensible and also evoke empathy. In this way Jochheim represents the ordinary German as victim, even where he/she is also a perpetrator. This construction thus reflects both the desire to confront the past, but also an awareness of the wish for a more differentiated understanding of the actions of ordinary Germans. Offering an exculpatory reading like this may signify an attempt to strike a balance between these opposing positions, between acknowledging culpability and the desire for forgiveness. Jochheim confronts past complicity yet he does not condemn the individual outright. Whilst Hans Grossmann's story is problematic in this regard it nevertheless also provides an early example of the shifting patterns of

²⁸⁹ The pattern of absolving culpability recurs in other representations, but they also differ in so far as the focus we see in this narrative on female abandonment of the male partner is replaced with a focus on male abandonment of the female partner, in spite of evidence that suggests women were more likely to instigate divorce proceedings against their Jewish spouses. Meyer, B., 2004. 'Geschichte im Film: Judenverfolgung, Mischehen und der Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943', pp.23-36.

generational memory that became more prominent throughout the 1990s. Second generation Germans in particular have altered their position. Although they previously adopted a confrontational stance with their parents' generation, post-unification, they began to reconsider the first experiential generation from a more empathetic vantage point.²⁹⁰ This is a pattern that we see later in this chapter and in Chapter 5.

ix) Unity through Solidarity, Suffering and Resistance?

If the representation of the perpetrators pointed to the desire for a more differentiated identity on Jochheim's part, it also served to draw attention to, and heighten the existence of an oppositional community in his work. Whilst the number of Germans as everyday perpetrators is relatively scant in Hans Grossmann's story the number of Germans, who express solidarity and even oppose Jewish persecution, is extensive. At one end of the spectrum are instances of spontaneous kindness, including a woman in the S-Bahn who gives Hans an apple, an elderly worker who tries to reassure Hans, claiming there will be better times ahead for him (p.72), the Hilperts (p.70), the elderly couple readily welcome the Grossmanns into their home after they flee the Gestapo in the middle of the night (p.170), and Emil Grossmann's former colleague, who helps to hide him (p.172). Expressions of solidarity, or at least sympathy, are also expressed via officials: for example, the duty desk officer at Kalkreuthstraße police station where Hans and Emil are taken upon their arrest. He is sympathetic as if to suggest he does not agree with the Nazis but is powerless to act against them, but he does, whether knowingly or unwittingly aid the pair, by giving them the opportunity to dispose of their incriminating evidence (pp.175-177).

Solidarity also features on a familial level. Hans' aunt Luise, his mother's sister, remains a close contact throughout the entire Nazi period. She attends the protest, readily aids the family's involvement in Gruppe Samuel, hiding their funds, is instrumental in helping the family to live illegally, and as it turns out, is also involved in underground resistance helping persecuted individuals, primarily Jewish Germans, to survive (p.142, p.163, pp.170-172). Similarly, the Grossmann's involvement in underground resistance is also facilitated by a number of non-Jewish Germans, such as Hilde, a prostitute working out of a brothel on Alexanderplatz, who provides shelter for

²⁹⁰ Bernhard Schlink's 1995 novel *Der Vorleser*. Zurich: Diogenes is a well-known example of this trend.

the people the group are trying to protect, and who risks her own life by seeking out and forewarning the Grossmanns after she witnesses David Hildesheim's arrest. The fact that the Grossmanns are subsequently unable to find her after the end of the war suggests that she didn't survive (pp.167-169).²⁹¹ Opposition thus goes hand in hand with depictions of suffering and atonement. As we see with Hilde, having warned the Grossmanns she disappears, and although her fate is left ambiguous, it is implied that she most probably died because of her involvement in Gruppe Samuel.²⁹² Hilde is not the only character willing to risk their lives. Schneider, the group's forger commits suicide so that he cannot betray the group to the Gestapo. The offer of shelter Emil's former colleague and his wife make also points to willingness towards sacrifice and atonement:

Wenn du mal untertauchen mußt, kannst du zu uns kommen. Meine Frau und ich sind alt. Was riskieren wir denn schon.... (p.172).

It is in Rosenstraße, unsurprisingly, that the themes of suffering and atonement are emphasised most strongly. We see this in the description of the confrontation between the protesters and SS officers who threaten to but do not shoot the protesters when they remain in Rosenstraße. Clara Grossmann describes the scene:

Die ersten Schreie: Mörder! Ihr Feiglinge! Im Mute vollkommener Verzweiflung. Ihr Mörder! Auf Frauen schießen! Ich habe mitgeschrien. Mir wurde alles egal. Uns war alles egal. Jede von uns wußte: Wenn die jetzt wirklich schießen, dann ist auch von den Gefangenen keiner mehr zu retten. Ich sah wie der SS-Mann hinter den Maschinengewehren den Mund weit aufriß. Ein Kommando? Unser Schreien übertönte alles (p.134).²⁹³

²⁹¹ Her absence from the post-war picture may also serve as a metaphor for the limitations of collective memory that similarly excluded 'social outsiders' such as Hilde because, in spite of her contribution to the resistance group, as a prostitute, she wouldn't have been seen as a good role model, and is therefore excised from the wider picture. As Dennis Riffel points out the original criteria for recognition of the Silent Heroes was relatively strict and limited, excluding many. See Riffel, '„Unbesungene Helden“: Der Umgang mit „Rettung“, im Nachkriegsdeutschland', pp. 317-335. However, Fräulein Schmidt, the prostitute who featured in Gad Beck's autobiography, and who bears comparison with Hilde survived. Moreover, as the partner of widower Erich Nehlhans (1899-1950), one of the co-founders and for a time president of the post-war Berlin Jewish Community in Beck's words the aristocratic former Alexanderplatz prostitute became their unofficial First Lady. Beck, *Und Gad ging zu David*, Kindle Edition. Location, 2991.

²⁹² Problematically, the fact that Hilde's fate is left unknown, that she has no known grave draws parallels, consciously or otherwise, with the fate of millions of Holocaust victims.

²⁹³ The 1990 version is slightly shorter (p.134). The sentences „Uns war alles egal“ and „Jede von uns wußte: Wenn die jetzt wirklich schießen, dann ist auch von den Gefangenen keiner mehr zu retten.“ were

This is further perpetuated in Hans' explanation of how, upon his and his father's return, they find Clara unwell, her participation at the protest, the shouting, being exposed to the cold having induced her physical state. But her illness also serves as a metaphor for Germany's sins, one that Clara, as one of the good Germans, endures in order to atone for the crimes committed (p.138). Jochheim suggests that non-Jewish Germans resisted and suffered for German Jews but also as a result of Jewish persecution. He is not alone in this view, as we have already seen it in Chapter 2.

We also find continuity here with resistance trends. As Chapters 1 and 2 highlighted, since the 1980s resistance historiography has shifted its focus and adopted a more inclusive approach to understanding the extent and diversity of resistance to National Socialism. It is this shift, as I argued earlier, which facilitated engagement with the Rosenstraße protest. By showing a broad range of opposition to the regime Jochheim's text appears to parallel this inclusivity. It also alludes to the existence of an 'other Germany' (synonymous with German resistance) which was distinct from but existed in parallel with the Third Reich. The concept is an important feature of divided and also unified Germany's foundational myths.

Jochheim's allusion to an 'other Germany' is heightened through the references to recognised acts of resistance, particularly those in the West German tradition that he weaves into the narrative. Central to the entire work is the protest in Rosenstraße (pp.126-142), but this is also supplemented by references to the White Rose group, (pp.74-75), the 20th July Plot (p.164), and the aforementioned Herbert Baum Group (pp.101-104, pp.142-143). This enables Jochheim to suggest that resistance was widespread, and a focus for positive self-identification. Hans Grossmann's narrative re-imagines German society under Nazism as considerably oppositional, although notably, Jochheim never allows instances of German resistance to overshadow Jewish suffering.²⁹⁴ Accordingly, references to the White Rose and Stauffenberg's resistance are relatively brief. Even the protest is only addressed over 16 pages, a little over ten percent of the entire narrative. Aside from Rosenstraße, the resistance of the Herbert Baum group receives the most attention, detailing their aims, activities, and their

added in the 1993 edition (p.131) and retained in the 2002 edition (p.179). Changes to the text are discussed in section 2 of this chapter.

²⁹⁴ We note a similar pattern later in Chapter 5.

politics. As a Communist resistance group they had received relatively little attention in West German resistance historiography, but had been formally recognised in the GDR in 1981.²⁹⁵ Jochheim's text places emphasis on the fact that the group was first and foremost a Jewish resistance group, working to save fellow German Jews from deportation. Hence Hans Grossmann's story not only emphasises the existence of an 'other Germany' but in this instance suggests that it also Jewish.

Resistance, as it is re-imagined in Hans Grossmann's story, allows for the suggestion that Jewish and non-Jewish Germans were unified in their mutual aim of defeating the regime, and that this can provide the basis for a positive future relationship. That it has been influenced by trends in resistance historiography, as well as by the wider socio-political shifts and patterns is evident in his thematisation of resistance and solidarity. Whilst he re-creates a morally oppositional society that showed a broad spectrum of dissent and opposition, in line with the inclusive approach to resistance, this re-imagining also indicates the influence of prevailing concerns about the re-nationalisation of identity, and a recurrence of the past. In response Jochheim's narrative seeks to encourage tolerance and Philo-Semitism by suggesting that there is a historical precedent within German history, a mutual struggle against a common enemy: the Nazi. In fostering notions of a positive German-Jewish relationship, the pedagogic imperative behind the narrative is revealed – by identifying positively with one another, Jochheim indicates that Jewish and non-Jewish Germans can derive positive sense of self, re-investing in the idea of a German-Jewish symbiosis. Whilst this invocation of the symbiosis represents an ideal, (and largely a non-Jewish German one at that), it is not isolated. We can find other examples, ranging from the vast array of projects on Jewish history in the early 1990s, alongside state-funded initiatives such as the Silent Heroes project, through to a popular works, such as Peter Schneider's *Wenn wir nur eine Stunde gewinnen...* and Reha and Al Solokow's *Ruth und Maria* to name but a few.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ In 1981 a memorial designed by artist Jürgen Raue was placed at the edge of Berlin's Lustgarten. On this memorial and the changes to it see: Jordan, J.A., 2006. *Structures of Memory. Understanding Urban Change on Berlin and Beyond*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.73-75. Although Jochheim their resistance as Jewish, it is as a Communist that the group's founder member, Herbert Baum, was primarily identified in the GDR.

²⁹⁶ Karen Remmler identified the trend in historical research projects in the early 1990s focusing on all aspects of Jewish life, particularly in Berlin. Remmler, 'Encounters Across the Void' p.23. In 2008 the Memorial to German Resistance opened the Silent Heroes Memorial Centre, based on the project research project led by Wolfgang Benz examining the "Rescue of Jews in National Socialist Germany

x) Evoking notions of a German-Jewish Symbiosis

The concept of a German-Jewish symbiosis is far from new and has its origins in the Enlightenment period, reinforced through the recognition of Jewish Germans legal equality in 1848 and the legalisation of intermarriage. Whilst it is an ambiguous if not illusionary concept, particular types or models of this symbiosis have re-emerged in recent years and, as both Karen Remmler and Stuart Taberner have argued separately, they are important for what they indicate about German national identity construction, about the desire for redemption and rehabilitation in the post-Wall age and a longing for German mourning.²⁹⁷

Taberner remarks that the symbiosis was always more “cherished by Jews with greater ardour than by non-Jewish Germans.”²⁹⁸ However, its repeated evocation in the present suggests that in contemporary Germany the opposite may now be the case, a factor reflected in the adoption of either Weimar or 19th century assimilationist models of this symbiosis. The Weimar model is said to be based on “a cosmopolitan notion of German identity”, in which German Jews played a central role.²⁹⁹ It has proven popular for the way in which it can be appropriated to reflect ideals important in the Berlin Republic, most notably the commitment to openness and tolerance.³⁰⁰ By contrast the 19th century assimilationist model seeks to celebrate German-Jewish life, in which Jews, through their patriotism, identify themselves primarily as Germans, and that although considerably damaged by Nazism, this symbiosis was not entirely destroyed.³⁰¹ Karen Remmler similarly argues that the prominence of the German-Jewish symbiosis in fact expresses a desire for a return of German cosmopolitanism in order to return to some form of normalcy, and a chance for Germany to redeem itself by embracing German-Jewish culture in the present. In addition she also argues the focus on the German-

1933-1945”, and funded by the German Government Commission for Cultural and Media Affairs, the Senate Office for Science, Research and Culture of Berlin, and the European Regional Development Fund. Schneider, P., 2001. *Wenn wir nur eine Stunde gewinnen...Wie ein jüdischer Musiker die Nazi Jahre überlebte*. Berlin: Rowohlt; Solokow, R., and Solokow A., 2006. *Ruth und Maria. Eine Freundschaft auf Leben und Tod. (Berlin 1942-1945)*. Berlin: Metropol.

²⁹⁷ Remmler, ‘Encounters Across the Void’, pp.3-30; Taberner, ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film’ pp. 357-372.

²⁹⁸ Taberner, ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film’, p.361.

²⁹⁹ Remmler, ‘Encounters Across the Void’, p.5.

³⁰⁰ Op.cit., p.358.

³⁰¹ Ibid., pp.360-361.

Jewish past functions as a cipher, a way of avoiding a confrontation with German-German relations.³⁰²

Remmler and Taberner's studies focus on evocations of the German-Jewish symbiosis towards the end of the 1990s and early 2000s, Jochheim's text, however, indicates their usage at a much earlier point in time. Where Jochheim's evocation of the symbiosis provides a basis for a positive sense of self in the face of the re-nationalisation of identity and the rise in xenophobia, its later evocation relates more to conceptions of victimhood and identity, as I discuss in Chapter 5.

Remmler has also suggested that the desire for a revival of the German-Jewish symbiosis is concomitant with the desire, particularly amongst members of the second generation, for Germans to mourn their own suffering, as we saw earlier.³⁰³ Jochheim articulates that longing in this work, evoking a largely conservative re-imagining of the German-Jewish symbiosis inculcating a positive, open and tolerant sense of identity that is appealing but does not seek to forget the National Socialist past. At the same time it draws on long-established historical details. For example, Jochheim refers to the fact that many German Jews underestimated the Nazis because they believed themselves to be German. In this regard, Jochheim's text re-covers well established ground. We find an example of this in the opening pages of Hans Grossmann's story in the narrator's description of his family background, stating:

Die Familie meines Vaters gehörte nicht zu den strenggläubigen Juden. Mein Vater wollte in erster Linie ein guter Bürger sein, der sich von den anderen Deutschen lediglich durch seine Religion unterschied, so wie sich auch Katholiken und Protestanten unterscheiden. Diese Einstellung hatten die meisten deutschen Juden, deren Familien schon lange Zeit, oft seit Generationen, in Deutschland lebten (pp.26-28).

It is the association with the nation state that is the determining factor in Emil Grossmann's identity, and that of his family. To marry a non-Jewish German presents no obstacle and causes no familial rift amongst the Grossmanns. This assimilationist model of the symbiosis, the hyper-patriotism, is also evoked in reference to Emil

³⁰² Remmler, 'Encounters Across the Void', pp.17-23.

³⁰³ Ibid., p.23.

Grossmann's service during the First World War, and reaction to anti-Semitic propaganda, which placed blame for the war's loss on Jewish soldiers. Hans explains:

Manchmal wurde mein Vater richtig wütend, wenn Hitler oder andere behaupteten, die Juden seien keine richtigen und guten Deutschen. Dann wies er auf ein Foto, das ihn als Soldaten zeigt. Mit Orden. Damals, 1914, sei er sofort eingezogen worden. Vier Jahre sei er im Krieg gewesen. Ohne Wenn und Aber hätten die Juden ihre Wehrpflicht erfüllt. Viele – sogar der größere Teil – hätten sich freiwillig gemeldet. Oft wiederholte er: 100 000 jüdische Männer seien im Weltkrieg für Deutschland als Soldaten in den Krieg gegangen. Ein Sechstel der damaligen deutschen jüdischen Bevölkerung (p.25).

Jochheim's text reiterates these earlier beliefs overlooking the fact that they were little shared. Moreover, it also re-legitimises them. Throughout the narrative, we see that the German-Jewish symbiosis continues in spite of the threat posed by National Socialism. Inter-marriage is, of course, the defining example of this symbiosis. True Germanness it seems is found in relation to Jewishness. This idea is articulated by one of the Rosenstraße detainees. He describes the protesters as „treue deutsche Ehefrauen und Mütter“ (p.133). The protesters, these women, thus embody the very essence of what Jochheim takes to be true Germanness, which manifests itself in their loyalty, their steadfastness in the face of the regime.³⁰⁴ Their this sense of 'self' is defined with, not against Jewishness. It is, Jochheim suggests, these decent Germans, who through their loyalty, their true Germanness, ensured that the German-Jewish symbiosis was not doomed to failure, that it could indeed be sustained.³⁰⁵ Moreover, Jochheim implies it also has a future, and that together Jewish and non-Jewish Germans will overcome the Third Reich. As the narrative draws to a close, Emil and Hans are reunited with Clara, who had sought refuge in the home of her employers, the Hilperts. Emil and Hans are taken into their home, too. Together the two families await the end of the war, willingly united under the one roof, awaiting their mutual liberation (p.187). Nazism, it is implied, was a phenomenon that both Jewish and non-Jewish Germans needed to be rescued from. This closing scene therefore provides a metaphor for the future of a

³⁰⁴ Again we see this repeated in Chapter 5.

³⁰⁵ Jochheim is not alone in taking this perspective as later works also indicate. Taberner suggests this perspective is promoted through in a number of works and speeches by Martin Walser and by Peter Schneider. Taberner, 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film', pp.360-361.

German-Jewish symbiosis, suggesting a true belonging between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans, making the Grossmanns and the Hilperts a template for the future.

Hans Grossmann's story articulates the desire for a positive identity, both for Jewish and non-Jewish Germans at the beginning of the 1990s. It shows that memories of the Rosenstraße protest projected through this narrative have been shaped by a number of key factors, and provides insight into at times problematic notions of the 'self' and 'other' that have shaped understanding of the protest. In order to assess the extent to which, and how attitudes have subsequently altered, in section two of this chapter, I consider the alterations and additions to the text in the subsequent editions.

2. Between 1990 – 2002: Additions and Changes to Jochheim's Popular History

Gernot Jochheim's popular history has undergone a number of changes since the first edition, including a change of publisher, alterations to its title, and a shift in its target readership. These changes were implemented, according to Jochheim, in order to lend his work an appeal to a broader target audience.³⁰⁶ Examining the changes, as I shall demonstrate in what follows, illustrates the changing engagement with the protest over time, and against the changing socio-political backdrop of the first twelve years of unified Germany. The alterations point to the interplay between cultural memories, how they shape and influence one another over time. This section demonstrates the similarities between the way Jochheim has altered his text, and shifting discourses around the Nazi past generally, and the protest in Rosenstraße in particular. It considers the changes to Hans Grossmann's story, along with the additions and alterations to the popular history.

i) Stylistic and Factual Changes to Hans Grossmann's story

A line-by-line comparison reveals that by and large the alterations to Hans Grossmann's story are to be found between the 1990 and 1993 editions, with a lesser amount between the 1993 and 2002 editions. The changes that occur between the first and second editions include stylistic modifications, in terms of register and syntax. These seem largely in response to the shift in target audience. Having originally written

³⁰⁶ Jochheim, 'Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder!', p.100.

Hans Grossmann's story for teenagers and young adults, the later editions were aimed at a wider adult readership, and the language altered to reflect that. The sub-title of the introduction to Hans Grossmann's story reflects such a shift, moving from an active to passive sentence structure, from: „Warum ich die Geschichte von Hans Grossmann aufgeschrieben habe" (1990, pp.10-11), to „Zum Entstehen dieses Buches" (1993, pp.29-30) and finally „Zum Entstehen der Geschichte von Hans Grossmann" (2002, pp.107-108).

With each edition, Jochheim's explanation of the narrative's origins has also been extended, becoming more detailed, particularly with regard to his approach, and the authenticity of the events he depicts. Whilst he acknowledges the primary use of oral history testimonies, he also emphasises that these were supplemented by and cross-referenced against archival and secondary sources (2002, p.108). Jochheim's increasing justification of his work, I suggest, echoes an increasingly critical stance vis-à-vis the protest, and that as interpretations of the protest have been called into question, Jochheim had felt it increasingly necessary to justify and legitimise his own work.

In addition, he also makes a number of factual alterations. In the first instance this reflects the shift in format away from a fictional narrative towards a part-documentary style piece, and in the second it echoes developments in historical research, in commemoration, as well as political and social changes. It also indicates Jochheim's attempt to keep the narrative up-to-date and relevant. Examples include amending the dates on which specific events took place or on which particular measures were implemented. For instance Hans explains that all German Jews were required to adopt the additional forenames of Israel or Sara. When this measure – the *Namensänderungsverordnung* – came into effect has been altered in each edition. In 1990, he simply explains, „So hieß ich dann Hans Israel Grossmann" (p.20), without specifying any point in time, whereas in 1993 he stated, „So hieß ich dann seit 1938 Hans Israel Grossmann"(p.37), and in 2002 he subsequently amended the text to read, „So hieß ich dann seit dem 1. Januar 1939 Hans Israel Grossmann" (p.112).³⁰⁷

³⁰⁷ The *Namensänderungsverordnung* that Jochheim refers to was introduced on 17th August 1938, making the second edition the most accurate.

Similarly Jochheim amends other details to reflect historical accuracy. This includes the date the Oranienburgerstraße Synagogue – the Neue Synagogue – was damaged. He first orientates it during the week of the Factory Action but in later editions states that it took place in November 1942 (1990, pp.106 and 126; 1993, pp.106 and 123; 2002, pp.163 and 173).

Factual alterations are also introduced with direct reference to the events around the protest, and specifically in relation to the deportation of detainees from Rosenstraße to Auschwitz. In the 1990 edition, Hans refers to the number deported as ‘over 20’ (p.139), but in the later editions he is more specific, referring to 25 men (1993, p.135; 2002, p.183). Similarly whilst he originally stated around 2000 German Jews were detained in Rosenstraße (p.127), in the later accounts this has been revised downwards to approximately 1500 (1993, p.124; 2002, p.174). In discussing Alois Brunner’s evasion from the law, the reader first learns that he is still alive and well living under Syrian protection in Damascus (1990, p.113). Subsequent suggestion of his death – rumoured in the press in the early 1990s but later discounted, is, however, referred to in the second and third editions (1993, p.111; 2002, p.116), indicating Jochheim’s attempt to maintain accuracy, and to reflect events contemporary to the popular history’s production.³⁰⁸

A number of the alterations also indicate the changing nature of commemoration and remembrance, as well as shifting patterns of historical memory. The commitment to a critical memory of the Nazi past is reflected in Jochheim’s references to the changing function of *the Haus der Wannsee Konferenz* and how, as muted in the 1993 edition, it had been re-developed into a site of remembrance (1990, p.95; 1993, p.97; 2002, p.157). Shifts in remembering can also be observed in the references to the Herbert Baum resistance group, suggesting their image has undergone change in recent years. The 1990 edition offers a fuller account of the group’s activities, claiming:

Die Gruppe druckte und verteilte Flugblätter. Im Mittelpunkt der Aktivitäten stand jedoch, Juden bei der Flucht aus Deutschland zu helfen, um sie vor der

³⁰⁸ He also excises place names associated with the Cold War era, removing his reference to the ČSSR (1990:113) following the collapse, and subsequent division of Czechoslovakia into two independent states. The dissolution of Czechoslovakia was decided upon in November 1992, and came into effect on 1st January 1993.

Deportation in den Osten zu bewahren. Dafür besorgten sie gefälschte Ausweise und so weiter (p.103).

Yet in the later editions, reference to the group's attempts to help German Jews flee, arranging for forged documents, has been excised from the narrative; all that remains of their activities is the production and distribution of anti-Nazi pamphlets. Re-shaping the groups' activities in this way makes them comparable with the better-known resistance of the White Rose in Munich, but also diminishes the extent of their opposition, suggesting what that whilst their attempts at saving German Jews was once an important aspect of the narrative that reinforced the idea of the Jewish fighter, as patterns of remembering and identity have altered, so to has the way the group is represented. Yet, for all these minor alterations, the core content remains the same. The impact of changing engagement with the protest in historiography and in cultural memory, as well as the popular history's influence on other media of memory, is more clearly in evidence in the additions to the revised and updated editions from 1993, and 2002, as the following section now shows.

ii) **From *Protest in der Rosenstraße* to *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*: »Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder«. Initial Additions to the Jochheim's Popular History**

Drawing heavily on the fictionalised account in Walter Laqueur's *Jahre auf Abruf*,³⁰⁹ Jochheim provides a detailed summary the events of the Factory Action. He claims hundreds gathered day and night to protest against the deportation of Jewish husbands and children, and could not be dissuaded from their actions, even under threat of violence. The estimated release of approximately 1500 men, women and children began on 6th March, and these former detainees were conscripted into forced labour until the end of the war. Jochheim also notes that coinciding with the protest in Rosenstraße, a similar, albeit smaller and shorter protest took place outside the former Jewish Old People's home in Große Hamburger Straße. He also suggests that neither event had been recognised in the old Federal Republic (pp.13-15). That the events have been largely forgotten is also attributed to the fact that the building itself no longer exists and

³⁰⁹ Jochheim describes Walter Laqueur's account as autobiographical when in fact it clearly states that it is a work of fiction.

therefore there is no physical reminder, and also the street's significance had been overlooked by post-war city planners (pp.16-17).

Providing background information on the events, Jochheim anchors the protest in the broader context of Jewish persecution, illustrating how the situation for intermarried German Jews differed from that of so-called 'full-Jews'. Whilst Jochheim states he cannot definitively, nor indeed does he seek to claim that the regime intended to deport the detainees and that the protest thwarted the regime's plan, his analysis strongly points towards this conclusion (pp.27-28). It also indicates the need for historical discussion.³¹⁰ The popular history concludes by drawing the reader's attention to issues of memory and remembrance and the grassroots efforts to ensure its recognition, which at the time was far from certain. Drawing comparisons with the commemoration of resistance to the Holocaust elsewhere in occupied Europe, Jochheim remarks on the lack of commemoration in Rosenstraße, noting that grassroots activities have demonstrated the public's interest in the events through the temporary exhibition and Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture (1993, pp.180-183).³¹¹ This hints at tensions over memorialisation at the time of publication, but also to the commitment of grassroots activists in challenging dominant memorial culture.³¹² Using his popular history *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße* as a forum for generating interest and support, Jochheim raised awareness of the fact that the Ingeborg Hunzinger's project was jeopardised, caught between the competing agendas of the memorial actors involved.³¹³

Through the additions to his work, Jochheim's popular history also appears to address gaps in existing historical memory, pointing to the blind spots in historical research (pp.27-28). In making the Rosenstraße protest accessible to a wider audience, Jochheim

³¹⁰ This anticipates the criticisms that were subsequently raised by Cohen and which Jochheim subsequently seeks to address in his 2002 edition.

³¹¹ Jochheim provides two examples of resistance to the Holocaust that had by then long been recognised. These are the protest strikes by Amsterdam Dockers in 1941 against the deportation of Danish Jews, and the rescue of Danish Jews following on information of impending deportations fed to the Danish resistance by German diplomat Georg Ferdinand von Duckwitz (1993: 179).

³¹² Issues surrounding the memorialisation projects in Rosenstraße will be discussed in Chapter 6.

³¹³ In this regard, Jochheim did not succeed in forcing the issue. The installation of Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture eventually proceeded because the land on which it now stands, and which was subject to a dispute over ownership, was deemed unfit for construction, owing to the surrounding buildings which would limit sufficient access to natural light to any new building. Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.111-120.

himself criticised the protest's lack of recognition, a factor he initially attributes to the old Federal Republic (1993, p.13) but later revises suggesting it has to be attributed to the respective interests, and politics of remembering in both East and West Germany (2002, pp.34-35). These additions to Jochheim's work indicate the prominence of popular citizens' initiatives at the beginning of the 1990s, reflecting the broader commitment towards confronting the Nazi past in unified Germany, and the commitment to creating an inclusive image of resistance. A comparison with the later edition, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße* illustrates a significant shift in remembering.

iii) From *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*: »Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder« to *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße Berlin 1943: Berichte, Dokumente, Hintergründe*: Further Additions and Alterations to Jochheim's Popular History

In an attempt to respond to the criticisms levelled at his 1993 popular history, most notably the accusation that it could neither provide an exact analysis of the sequence of events, nor that it constituted an historical investigation,³¹⁴ Jochheim's revised third edition seeks to offer the reader a more detailed and analytical insight into the events, addressing changes in historiography, developments in research and the field of memorialisation, providing a wealth of material previously inaccessible outside of the archives. As I have already pointed out, the third edition saw a change to a two-part format in which the documentary section preceded the fictional version of the events. That Jochheim introduced this dimension can be seen as an attempt to respond to his critics but it is also an indicator of changing patterns in cultural memory and developments in historical research. Again, by using a line-by-line comparison, changes to the text can be identified. In examining them it becomes possible to see, in this instance, how developments in historical research have filtered through into this popular account, leading Jochheim to re-position himself in relation to the question of the protest's success. By comparing section one of the 1993 and 2002 editions we see how the changing patterns of historical interpretation are subtly alluded to. In 1993, Jochheim described the events as follows:

³¹⁴ Cohen, 'Geschichte für Schüler erzählt', p.19.

In der ersten Märzwoche 1943 protestierten in der Rosenstraße in Berlin-Mitte tage-und nächtelang viele hundert Menschen – überwiegend Frauen – gegen eine Deportation ihrer jüdischen Ehepartner, Kinder und Verlobten, die dort, nämlich im Gebäude der ehemaligen Sozial-Verwaltung der Jüdischen Gemeinde (Rosenstraße 2-4), gefangengehalten wurden (p.13).

By the 2002 edition, however, Jochheim's re-phrasing of the same paragraphs points to a realignment of the author's position. He writes:

In der ersten Märzwoche 1943 protestierten in der Rosenstraße in Berlin-Mitte tage-und nächtelang viele hundert Menschen – überwiegend Frauen – gegen eine von ihnen befürchtete Deportation ihrer jüdischen Ehepartner, Kinder und Verlobten, die dort, nämlich im Gebäude der ehemaligen Sozial-Verwaltung der Jüdischen Gemeinde (Rosenstraße 2-4), gefangengehalten wurden (p.9).

This re-positioning falls in line with the emerging trend in historical research, as seen in Chapter 2, that disputed the regime's intentions for the Rosenstraße detainees at the time of the Factory Action. Where in 1993, Jochheim's phrasing indicated that the deportations were intended; in 2002 his phrasing is less affirmative, underlining what was feared but without suggesting that it was a given fact. Certainly the greater attention to detail, the nuances introduced into the 2002 edition reflect the increased investment in historical research.³¹⁵ Where the 1993 edition suggested the protest ended abruptly on 6th March 1943 as the first detainees were released (p.13) the 2002 edition suggests it was more gradual:

Dieses Geschehen, [...] endete nach etwa einer Woche, als offenbar damit begonnen wurde, Gefangene in größerer Zahl freizulassen (p.9).

This modification reflects Jochheim's awareness of recent findings in historical research. In particular it reflects Beate Meyer's suggestion that not only were some detainees released within days of their arrest, as testimonies collected by Jochheim also

³¹⁵ Whilst he references Beate Meyer specifically, his popular history also appears influenced by Gruner's research and also Diane Schulle's contribution to the 2000 exhibition *Juden in Berlin*, see for example: Schulle, D., 2000. 'Gebt uns unsere Männer frei!' In: B. Meyer and S. Hermann, eds. *Juden in Berlin 1938-1945*. Berlin; Philo, pp. 159-168. Alterations to the section of the history of the street also reflect the fact that together with Johannes Rösler, Jochheim researched co-authored a small exhibition that is on display in the Hotel Alexanderplatz, which is located at Rosenstraße 1, the only original building on the street to have withstood the war and post-war development of the Mitte district. Compare for example histories of the street in the 2nd and 3rd editions, here, (1993:16-17) and (2002:12-21).

suggest, but that the majority were released in waves beginning on 6th March but which lasted up to a number of weeks (p.9).³¹⁶ The impact of historical research is also indicated through the inclusion of additional facts, for example that whilst the majority of arrests made during the Factory Action occurred during on the first day, subsequent arrests continued throughout the whole of the following week (2002, p.26), and that spouses in so-called privileged intermarriages, previously believed to have been exempted from the Factory Action, were also arrested and detained both in Rosenstraße and Große Hamburger Straße (2002, p.27).³¹⁷

That historical research has influenced Jochheim's text appears to be in evidence in his summaries of the events and their significance. Evidence he cited in support of his argument in 1993, he himself places under scrutiny in the 2002 edition, showing how, in light of further research this evidence can be interpreted differently. This example pertains to Jochheim's interpretation of reports to and from Auschwitz regarding the anticipated number of deportees following the Factory Action and the corresponding number of arrivals to the camp. Whilst in 1993 Jochheim suggested the discrepancies indicated that the Rosenstraße detainees were to be deported as feared, and that the protest prevented the regime from sending its intended number of deportees, in 2002 Jochheim suggested the discrepancies were more likely a reflection of the number of intended deportees, so-called 'full-Jews' who had fled into illegality having either been forewarned of the *razzia*, or having managed to escape arrest at the last moment. Moreover, the reliability of sources cited in support of his argument in 1993 is also scrutinised in the 2002 edition; having cited extensively from Goebbels' diaries, Jochheim subsequently casts doubt on their accuracy (1993, pp.27-28; 2002, pp.27-32).³¹⁸

These alterations suggest that historical research has filtered through and helped to shape the subsequent versions of Jochheim's text. It also indicates that where once popular history served to illuminate the blind spots of historical research and collective

³¹⁶ Meyer, 'Die Inhaftierung der „jüdisch Versippten“ in der Berliner Rosenstraße', pp.178-197.

³¹⁷ This shift is also reflected in the testimony provided to Jochheim in Renate Lemke's 1993 account, see pp. 80-83. See also the testimony of Otto Fried, cited pp.57-58.

³¹⁸ Jochheim also cites other developments in research that have affected his interpretation of the events, including the fact that the Factory Action was a nationwide *razzia* and not solely focused on Berlin. Also he questions Goebbels' role and influence in regard to German Jews in cities other than Berlin, and in other regions.

memory, it appears that popular and academic histories have gradually become more aligned in recent years. The changes between the different editions of Jochheim's popular history illustrate here the interaction between different media of memory in shaping understanding of the past, how they challenge but also reinforce one another. Popular history proved important in generating awareness of the events and the need for historical research. As historians have increasingly engaged with the events, the function of popular history has altered, from the position of confronting hegemonic memories of the past, to reinforcing newer ones.

The influence of different media of memory on one another has not been limited to popular and academic histories. The alterations to Jochheim's work also highlight the interplay between popular history and memorialisation. Moreover, this also reflects the shift in broader cultural memory trends from the focus on Jewish resistance and German Jewish solidarity and towards embracing notions of German suffering. In a section entitled *Wege des Erinnerns* (pp.84-105) Jochheim highlights how memorial engagement has progressed, outlining the processes and problems of memorialisation, from the early initiatives of the temporary exhibitions at the beginning of the decade through to the protest's inclusion in institutional memorial initiatives by the end of it. Jochheim's focus on memorialisation shows the influence of citizens' initiatives in effecting change.³¹⁹ The fact that the Topography of Terror's permanent exhibition in Rosenstraße draws on Jochheim's popular history again illustrates the interplay between different media. Jochheim's description of the protest, as re-told by Hans Grossmann, forms one of the exhibits on display, but unlike Jochheim's popular history, the exhibition makes no attempt to acknowledge the fact that Hans Grossmann is a fictional character.³²⁰ In so doing we see not only a blurring of the boundaries between different forms of representation but also the way in which particular memories are mutually reinforced and perpetuated; the exhibition lends Jochheim's account a legitimacy and vice-versa.

³¹⁹ The protest's memorialisation has resulted from private, grassroots initiatives, as Chapter 6 explains in detail, eventually receiving institutional attention, and then by an organisation, which itself has its origins in grassroots history.

³²⁰ As Chapter 6 shows, although Jochheim's text was used, the exhibition's curator also intended to move away from his interpretation.

Jochheim also incorporates into this edition key commemorative speeches from 1993, 2008 and 2009 by Jerzy Kanal, Chairman of the Berlin Jewish Community, Christiane Bergmann (SPD), Berlin Mayor and Senator for Women and Work, Cynthia Klein, president of the German branch of the Women's International Zionist Organisation, Rita Süßmüth (CDU), President of the German Parliament, and Ruth Gross-Pisarek, an eyewitness to the protest. The inclusion of these speeches serves to highlight both the extent to which the protest has become integrated into Berlin's memorial culture, but also to exemplify the changing significance of the events in cultural memory. They also reflect Jochheim's own shifting engagement with the Rosenstraße protest.

The 1993 speeches dovetail nicely with Jochheim's own work in so far as they echo issues of identity and interest in re-imagining past solidarity and civic courage. In fact, as Katharina Ochse observed, it was no coincidence that the Jewish Community commemorated the Rosenstraße protest, arguing that it, along with other events such as the opposition to Rainer Werner Fassbinder's 1975 play *Der Müll, die Stadt, und der Tod*, "were recalled as important acts in building Jewish self-confidence in Germany."³²¹ In his keynote speech, Jerzy Kanal drew a parallel between anti-Semitism in the Third Reich and contemporary problems of racism and violence against minorities, in much the same way as Jochheim had also suggested in Hans Grossmann's story (pp.87-88). Similarly, Christiane Bergmann's speech also evoked a positive image of German-Jewish unity emphasising German courage and heroism, but also hinted at the desire for redemption from the past on the basis of these German women (pp.89-90).

Including these speeches lends itself to the documentary style of this edition, but is also highlights the similarities and crossover between representations in different media, and the protest's contemporary political relevance. The inclusion of the 1998 speech, by contrast, serves to highlight the changing significance of the protest in cultural memory,

³²¹ Ochse, "What Could Be More Fruitful...", p.116. Ochse states inaccurately that 1993 was the first year in which the protest was commemorated by the Jewish Community when in fact it began in the late 1980s, but first received more considerable public attention in 1993 in relation to the 50th anniversary. The ceremony was captured on film in Rózà Berger-Fiedler's 1988 DEFA documentary, *Betrifft Fabrikaktion*. The fact that ceremonies have been conducted since the late 1980s is also borne out in the comments by Karen Margolis, one of the ceremonies co-ordinators in an email to the author of this thesis. Margolis, K., (q.margolis@gmail.com), 16th February 2013. *Rosenstrasse protest*. Email to H.J.Potter@bath.ac.uk.

and a shift away from a focus on German-Jewish solidarity and civic courage towards recognition of German victimhood and sacrifice (pp.97-101). Whilst Süssmuth's speech sought to draw a parallel between Jewish suffering and German sacrifice and resistance, Ruth Gross-Pisarek's speech (pp.102-105) sought to retain a critical balance in remembering. The differences between Süssmuth and Gross-Pisarek's speeches, given only months apart, underline the protest's perpetually changing relevance. They also indicate that the dynamics we saw in the historical debate – the push-pull between desires to emphasise German heroism and suffering in order to reconfigure a positive notion of national identity versus the wish to retain a critical memory of the events – are reflected in and through other representations of the protest.

The book's format, which by the third edition prioritises the factual sections over the fictional narrative, and Jochheim's rejection of his original interpretation of the events, point out that the function of the Rosenstraße narrative has changed. At the beginning of the 1990s, it appeared as a stabilising, and orientating narrative, promoting a positive sense of 'self', re-imagining a positive German-Jewish relationship that reflected the concerns over the re-nationalisation of identity following unification and competing desires for an identity based on a rejection of Jewish victimhood on the one hand and a desire for a more differentiated German identity on the other. The urgency of remembering the Rosenstraße protest, the emphasis on heroism, and the criticisms that it was long neglected, which were present in the early editions of Jochheim's popular history and in the 50th anniversary speeches, have faded as the protest has become more recognised, and as memory trends have altered.

3. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has examined Gernot Jochheim's popular histories of the Rosenstraße protest. It has analysed the original narrative, and the subsequent changes and additions to the texts over a twelve-year period. This chapter has thus suggested that although Jochheim's work has been overlooked in recent years, it is nevertheless a significant text. Themes which feature in Hans Grossmann's narrative in 1990 have subsequently come to the fore in later years, particularly in regard to subject of suffering and victimhood.

Jochheim's text has been influenced by a number of factors including the impact of generational trends and wider cultural discourses, both those encouraging, and those discouraging a confrontation with the Nazi past and the Holocaust. Jochheim's popular history, I have suggested, can be understood as an attempt to counter the *Schlußstrichtmentalität* of the 1980s and early 1990s by confronting the past, and in so doing re-imaging the German-Jewish relationship in a more positive, if not entirely unproblematic light. A thematic analysis of Hans Grossmann's story has indicated both the way the narrative has been shaped and influenced by prevailing discourses on national identity and has also indicated the desire for a more differentiated understanding of German national identity and Jewish identity at the beginning of the 1990s. The additions and revisions Jochheim has made to his text over the intervening twelve years, however, also point to the changing attitudes towards the Rosenstraße protest, its function in memory discourses and the interplay between different media of memory.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Jochheim's popular history was significant for the way in which it helped to challenge hegemonic memories of the past, and patterns of cultural memory, highlighting gaps in knowledge and understanding, and the need for further research. However, this has now changed. Jochheim's popular history no longer challenges hegemonic memories of the past rather it has become increasingly aligned with them, reinforcing more than it contests. At the time of writing, in February 2013 there have been no subsequent editions of Jochheim's popular history, and it seems unlikely, given the alignment between popular history and current hegemonic memories of the protest, that it will be revised and re-published in the near future.

Chapter 4

Multiple Perspectives: Competing Biographical Memories in Nina Schröder's *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*

1.

In 1997 journalist and author Nina Schröder (1961-) published the first edition of *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen: Der Frauenaufstand in der Rosenstraße*. Its publication was timely, drawing on the burgeoning interest in the Rosenstraße protest, as indicated by Jochheim's popular history, along with the grassroots investment in its memorialisation.³²² It also fitted in with the popular and marketable trends in "jüdische Memorienliteratur".³²³ At the same time, public interest in the German-Jewish relationship had intensified, not least as a result of the Goldhagen debate, suggesting there was a greater openness towards engaging with the subject. The publication of *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* was opportune. It built on existing cultural trends including a fascination with Jewish life, but it also offered a more differentiated perspective on the German-Jewish relationship than had been suggested by the Goldhagen debate. Schröder's text was later re-published under the amended title of *Die Frauen der Rosenstraße: Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* as part of a marketing tie into the nationwide release of Margarethe von Trotta's 2003 film, which included at least one promotional event in Munich.³²⁴

This chapter now considers Schröder's text and its use of biographical memories, examining how it intersects with discourses of memory, identity and generation in the latter part of the 1990s and early 2000s. After providing biographical summaries of the eyewitnesses, and discussing the significance of the photographic imagery in the text (which differs from that discussed in the previous chapter) this chapter addresses the key themes that emerge over the course of Schröder's text, namely the alleged taboo

³²² By this point there had already been two temporary exhibitions in Rosenstraße. Ingeborg Hunzinger's *Block der Frauen* memorial sculpture had also finally been installed, and the idea of an exhibition to complement the sculpture, had already been muted.

³²³ The term was coined by Thomas Kraft. See his edited volume published in 2000: *aufgerissen. Zur Literatur der 90er* Munich: Piper, p.11.

³²⁴ Nina Schröder spoke at a pre-screening event at City Kino, Sonnenstraße, Munich on Friday 19th September 2003, where audience members also had the opportunity to purchase autographed copies of her book. See: Hermanski, S., 2003. 'Die Dornen der Frauen. Katja Riemann in Margarethe von Trotta's „Rosenstraße“'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung SZ Extra*, 18-24 September, p.1.

breaking in relation to the protest (and a common theme in the late 1990s more generally), notions of the ordinary German and the Nazi, which leads into a discussion of normalization, as defined in Chapter 1, of ‘good Germans’, solidarity and resistance. In the latter stages of this chapter, my analysis will show that particular aspects of the established Rosenstraße narrative have been contradicted by these testimonies. Lastly, I consider the shifting attitudes toward the protest as indicated in the postscript to the 2003 edition.

Schröder’s text reflects the broader cultural trends over the course of the 1990s in regard to the surge in first generation remembering. In part we may see this as a result of the memory boom that followed unification, but it is also related to the phase of generational transition, with the inevitable passing of the first generation, and with them their memories of the period. This phase demarcates the shift from communicative to cultural memory. As Anne Fuchs and Mary Cosgrove highlight, in the 1990s “the last generation of participants in the Second World War began to communicate its living memory before it was absorbed by history.”³²⁵ Whilst this phenomenon was not limited to Germany, occurring similarly in France and Italy, for example, in the German case the resulting debates were particularly ferocious.³²⁶ This tallies with Aleida Assmann’s observation that experiential memory will not simply pass away quietly, rather that “in this liminal phase it can be reasserted with great emphasis.”³²⁷ Assmann identifies texts dealing with experiential memory as a “form of literature in which memory is a source, a theme and a mode of representation” and which is also intensely popular, particularly amongst second and third generation writers.³²⁸ Schröder’s text provides an example of this trend in which the author has captured memories so that they can be transmitted to future generations long after the witnesses themselves have passed.

The idea of testimony as a means of transmission to future generations is, according to historian Annette Wiewiorka, actually the purpose of witness testimony today. She argues that its function has changed. Where once it was a means of obtaining knowledge, it has become one of maintaining knowledge. Wiewiorka recognises that

³²⁵ Fuchs, and Cosgrove, 2006. Introduction, p.163.

³²⁶ Ibid., pp.163-164.

³²⁷ Assmann, On the (In)Compatibility of Memories of German Suffering’, p.192.

³²⁸ Ibid.

the accuracy of testimony inevitably blurs over time and that it is influenced by other factors, a point which is explored in more detail in what follows. Accordingly, testimony no longer serves as a means of bearing witness, but as a means of keeping those events before our eyes.³²⁹ It is still necessary, however, to consider, as I do in this chapter, the questions of what is transmitted, how and why.

The idea that witness testimony nevertheless offers the ‘truth’ continues as a concept, and is problematic, particularly when that testimony is questioned or deemed inaccurate. We see in this chapter that the various testimonies contradict one another. Yet, this does not mean that the one testimony is more or less ‘truthful’ or accurate than the other or that one is more valid either because it replicates arguments we have already come across, or conversely because it questions these very arguments. Here psychoanalyst Dori Laub’s understanding of testimony and truth is particularly useful. Laub talks of the ‘breakage of the frame’, by which he means that witnesses testify not to the event, but to its meaning, to the fact that it confounds expectations of what was possible. Where the protest in Rosenstraße is concerned, the issue is not so much the success or lack of it that they attest to, but the fact that the protest’s existence confounds the framework of what they thought was possible, it breaks with the pattern of subservience to the regime. For Laub, factual accuracy is not what is important rather it is the insight into the meaning of an event that testimonies provide that is significant, irrespective of whether it accurately replicates what took place.³³⁰

Although authenticity and accuracy are features of Schröder’s text, and, as I observe, they are also presented by the author as such, this chapter rejects the notion that first-person testimony can provide the truth about the events. It is, however, concerned with the way in which the memories relayed in Schröder’s text have been constructed, and what insight this offers. It considers the way in which they reflect and are also bound up with issues of remembering in the latter part of the 1990s, following on from the then predominant cultural trends in identifying German guilt and complicity.

³²⁹ Wieviorka, A., 1994. On Testimony. In: G. Hartman, ed. *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), pp.23-32, here p. 24.

³³⁰ Laub, D., 1992. Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening. In: S. Felman and D. Laub, eds. *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 57-62.

i) **The Inclusion of *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen***

At this point it is useful to assert why this thesis includes an analysis of these competing biographical memories. Schröder argues that prior to her book the only available work on the events in German was Gernot Jochheim's popular history (p.14 and p.310).³³¹ We note that it has, like Jochheim's work before it, been used as a point of reference for historians and journalists amongst others. As such this makes Schröder's text a valid object of study. Given these factors, we may ask in what way Schröder's account compares with, in what way it differs from Jochheim's work and why. Two points are immediately apparent, namely their respective use of eyewitness testimony, and of photography. In this regard both texts share a commonality, namely the attempt to emphasise the authenticity of their texts. However, they do so differently.

If we consider the role of eyewitness testimony, we note that it provides the primary source material for each text. Moreover, several of the eyewitnesses who first gave testimony to Jochheim subsequently told their stories to Schröder as well. This in itself is far from remarkable; several of the eyewitnesses also provided testimony to historians including Nathan Stoltzfus and Wolf Gruner, as well as to numerous journalists. However, the approach each author used differed: Jochheim conflated multiple testimonies into the one narrative, claiming his use of testimony lent his semi-fictional account its authenticity, whereas Schröder offered her reader different testimonies, some of which seemed to follow closely Jochheim's version whilst others offered competing versions, lending new perspectives to the events and their subsequent remembrance. By focusing on the eyewitnesses as real people rather than fictionalised characters, however, Schröder's account appeared to offer a greater authenticity, a truth that Jochheim's, as a semi-fictional account, which the author admits he altered in order to integrate as much detail as possible, could not.³³²

It is nevertheless a problematic text, as it implies that personal memories, especially where these have not previously been articulated, are more truthful, or less tainted than cultural memories, which are shaped by competing, often highly politicised interests

³³¹ She acknowledges Jochheim's assistance and Stoltzfus' research, which at the time of the Schröder's original publication, had also recently been published, but only in English.

³³² Jochheim, *Protest in der Rosenstraße*, pp10-11.

and agendas. Commenting on the protest in relation to collective memory, Schröder suggests that it re-emerged as a result of initiatives in the GDR in the 1980s, which sought to invest in the state's Jewish heritage for its own political ends (pp. 311-312).³³³ Whilst she was critical of the GDR, she remained sceptical of the way in which remembrance continued to be politicised, albeit perhaps less overtly so. Schröder drew the conclusion that because remembrance at the institutional level (e.g. of the Jewish Community) as well as the national was shaped by competing agendas, it was less valid. By contrasting it with personal memories, Schröder effectively implied that experiential memories were more authentic precisely because they had been relayed by an individual. She also implicitly equated individual remembrance with neutrality, as if to imply that individual recollection is not also shaped and framed by the wider social context, or recalled from a particular perspective. Joanne Saynor notes experiential memory reinstates the significance of the author, as we see here, and argues that the physicality of the Holocaust witness remains of importance, allowing first-person accounts to be read as 'truthful'.³³⁴ It thus appears, by virtue of the approach used, to offer the reader more credible interpretations of the events; therefore it seems more authentic, even if, in reality, it is no less constructed.

The issue of reader expectations of authenticity in the direct use of eyewitness testimony also brings us to the second point: photography. Whilst the use of photographs in biographical and autobiographical texts is relatively standard, their inclusion in both texts is also relevant. As we saw in Chapter 3, Jochheim used photographs in order to reinforce a sense of reality, but also to illustrate absence. Yet, Schröder uses photographs in various different ways as the later section of this chapter demonstrates in more detail. Alan Trachtenberg argues that the photograph is essentially a trace of a lived experience, a piece of data to be arranged, analysed and interpreted in much the same way as letters, artefacts and diaries may also be, providing supplementary data to complement the written narrative.³³⁵ Schröder uses photographs

³³³ Schröder's biography contains a number of inaccuracies. Whilst the protest did gain attention in the GDR in the 1980s, it also received attention in the FRG, as the previous chapters have shown. Moreover, as Chapter 1 highlighted the protest has featured in a number of works over the decades, even though it was not foregrounded in collective memory. Other inaccuracies include, for example, describing journalist Ruth Andreas-Friedrich as Jewish when in fact she was involved in the resistance group Onkel Emil, which attempted to aid German Jews (p.28).

³³⁴ Saynor, *Women Without a Past*, p.8

³³⁵ Trachtenberg, *Through a Glass, Darkly: Photography and Cultural Memory*, pp.121-122.

in this way, to authenticate and legitimise each narrative, and to facilitate the author-reader relationship. Yet, Schröder's use of photographs also illustrates the way in which photographs can be manipulated and used to validate something that the camera did not capture, but which nevertheless lends the narrative it accompanies a sense of authenticity.

We can see that whilst there are similarities between the texts, there is also sufficient difference between them to warrant an analysis of Schröder's text in line with cultural memory theory, which I adopted in the theoretical framework of this thesis. As I outlined in Chapter 1, it is necessary to examine the range of representations of the protest. *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* is a work of non-fiction, but one that distinguishes itself from historiography (p.15). As such it complements the different representations examined in this thesis. As I demonstrate in what follows, Schröder's text adds a further layer of memory for analysis, one that builds on from Jochheim's popular history. I also analyse it within the context of the influences and trends contemporary to its own production in order to understand how it has been shaped and what ideas predominate as a result.

Aleida Assmann has observed that memories of the past are created by a variety of competing and emotionalised forms, including eyewitness stories.³³⁶ Focusing on Schröder's text allows for an insight into the way the personal memories relate to the hegemonic interpretation of the events. It also provides a space for other or additional memories, to be articulated which hitherto have not fitted into the standard narrative. This reminds the reader that multiple memories co-exist, and official and private memories may not automatically correspond. Anne Fuchs has observed that hidden memories (e.g. those not part of dominant public discourses but often found in family memories) can contest and also reveal the limitations of public memory.³³⁷ In *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* existing memories of the protest were placed under scrutiny, revealing the shortcomings and blind spots in the protest's remembrance up to that point in time. This text has enabled eyewitnesses to dispute openly the accepted interpretation of the protest's success. Notably, although professional historians had, on

³³⁶ Assmann, On the (In)Compatibility of Guilt and Suffering in German Memory, p.199.

³³⁷ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.3.

the basis of Gruner's research, begun to question the dominant narrative, this had yet to become a feature of public discourse, as Chapter 2 illustrated.³³⁸

Examining Schröder's text is also pertinent to this thesis because it illustrates the interplay between the different media of memory and memorial actors. Schröder engages with different representations, and we also see these reflected in her own work. In addition, we see that how the different representations intersect in the eyewitnesses testimonies. As I examine the competing memories in Schröder's text, I draw on Joanne Saynor's observation that personal experiences as recounted by the author are intricately bound up with, and refracted through the dominant historical discourses. This is reflected in the attitudes and above all the language each author uses in their recollections.³³⁹ Historiography, Saynor suggests, determines the terms – such as victim and perpetrator – by which the past is relayed, hence it is necessary to consider how and why texts contest but also appropriate these terms.³⁴⁰ We see this in particular in the way the eyewitnesses engage with issues of perpetration, of the ordinary Nazi and soldier and the ordinary German. This shows a tendency to incorporate the ordinary German into the victim category and to exculpate the ordinary soldier in contradiction to the then prevailing ideas about guilt and complicity.

My analysis also draws on Harald Welzer's work in which he suggests that personal and national history are intertwined, and that the individual may even re-work – albeit subconsciously – their view of their experiences in relation to other cultural representations. These are then reproduced in individual recollections, filtered back into cultural representations, and, as we have already seen, tend to be viewed as truthful or more accurate. Hence, according to Welzer, we see a distinct blurring of the boundaries between the forms of communicative and cultural memory, which becomes particularly

³³⁸ Several of the witnesses had also previously articulated their doubts, most notably during a discussion as part of the 1992 temporary exhibition. The Brauns have consistently questioned the interpretation of the protest as the cause of the detainees' release, with Ursula Braun commenting to that effect in a 1992 interview for the weekly newspaper *Freitag Die Ost-West Wochenzeitung*. See: Lünenborg, M., 1992. 'Ein Stück vergessene Widerstandsgeschichte. Der „Aufstand der Frauen“ an der Berliner Rosenstraße im Februar 1943.' *Freitag*, 28 February, p. 14. Although their full names are not identified, it is clear that they are Herr und Frau B. A transcript of their testimony can be found on Gerhard Schumm's website, detailed below. Schumm was one of the founders of the temporary exhibition and has subsequently created a website on which details of the temporary exhibitions can be found, and which also provides details on resources on the Rosenstraße protest. Schumm, G., Interview Frau und Herr B. Available from: http://www.rosenstrasse-protest.de/interviews/interview_b%26b.html [Accessed 27 February 2013].

³³⁹ Saynor, *Women Without a Past?* pp.3-4.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.10.

apparent when personal memories are challenged by subsequent research especially if this sets eyewitness against historians, for example.³⁴¹ This does not in any way suggest that the eyewitness is intentionally misrepresenting their past; they may subjectively believe it to be true, but that personal memories become infused with general myths in collective remembrance. As memory and identity are interlinked, Welzer suggests, casting doubt upon these memories thus calls into question notions of the self that are bound up with them.³⁴² As Schröder's text indicates, conflicting personal memories cast doubt not only on the witnesses' notions of identity but also on those of the author. As I illustrate later in this chapter, in the postscript to the 2003 edition Schröder heavily criticises the shift towards a critical interpretation of the protest's success, demonstrating moral outrage on behalf of the protesters, but we may speculate that this has as much to do with her own sense of self, as with her position vis-à-vis the protest.

Analysing Schröder's text also affords us the opportunity of further considering the dynamics of remembering. As the theoretical framework in Chapter 1 made clear, it is necessary to identify the different memorial actors involved in the production of memories, including eyewitnesses, and to examine what is remembered, how and to what ends. Examining these competing memories allows us to see that remembrance of the protest is in fact diverse and differs from the then dominant interpretation of the events. This underlines the point raised by David Clarke and Ute Woelfel that although a particular version of an event predominates at any one time, it does not follow that there is a direct correlation between the dominant view of the events and its broad acceptance by the collective.³⁴³ Nor, I would add, does it necessarily correspond to the views of those who participated in the events. If we consider that at the time of Schröder's original publication in 1997 the hegemonic interpretation indicated that the protest was a success, we can see a significant deviation from this norm in the competing personal memories, with half of the witnesses disputing the cause of the

³⁴¹ Welzer, H., 2008. *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis. Eine Theorie der Erinnerung*. Munich: Beck. This reading of Welzer's approach is taken from: Clarke, D., and Wölfel, U., eds., 2012. *Remembering the German Democratic Republic: Divided Memory in a United Germany*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.19. Welzer cited the example of a historian who delivered a lecture in Dresden in which the documentary evidence presented refuted the claims of American fighter planes gunning down civilians in the streets; this potent image however was consolidated in literature and in historical accounts. Logistically, it was implausible, yet individuals claimed to have witnessed it first hand.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Clarke and Wölfel, *Remembering the German Democratic Republic*, pp.20-21.

detainees' release. Hence, we can see that memories are always social constructs, which, as Saynor has argued, engage with, contradict and contribute to narratives of the past.³⁴⁴

Schröder's text presents the reader with eight competing and at times conflicting narratives. What sets Schröder's work apart from the other representations examined in this thesis, is the fact that she appears to reproduce the witness accounts in their entirety.³⁴⁵ Given that her work was first published at a time when public discourses focusing on issues of everyday German guilt and complicity were both predominant and had begun to resonate, Schröder's text may also reflect a desire – particularly amongst the third generation – for a more complex reading of German history. More specifically, it points towards a more empathetic stance towards the perpetrator generation. Against the backdrop of official discourses of contrition, Schröder's text offered differing perspectives, showing that whilst some did indeed demonstrate anti-Semitism and were complicit with the regime, Germans were neither uniformly nor inherently anti-Semitic. Rather they also demonstrated unity and solidarity as evidenced in the instances of heroism, defiance, solidarity and civic courage prioritised in Schröder's book.

In addition, Schröder's text indicates that by the latter part of the 1990s the shift towards a focus on German wartime suffering had already begun, and that this went hand in hand with an exploration of Jewish suffering. Yet, even though the text gives much space to the recollections of the Rosenstraße detainees, by the end it is the experiences of the protesters that remain uppermost in the reader's mind. Whilst the book begins with a focus on Jewish suffering, it concludes by focusing on the traumas suffered by a German woman. This is reinforced in the postscript to the second edition, which points to the transition from guilt and culpability to victimhood in cultural discourses.³⁴⁶

Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen: Der Frauenaufstand in der Rosenstraße follows a straightforward structure. The introduction comprises a summary of the protest and

³⁴⁴ Saynor, *Women Without a Past*, p.2.

³⁴⁵ In the 2002 edition of his popular history, Jochheim also made the testimonies that had influenced his work available to his readers for the first time.

³⁴⁶ This is discussed in more detail in section 2 of this chapter, pp.166-169.

criticism of its place in collective memory, followed by a more detailed summary of the Factory Action and explanation of Nazi ideology regarding intermarriage and the classification of so-called partial Jews. There follow seven separate interviews with eight eyewitnesses, specifically two protesters, five detainees and one partial Jew who evaded detention. Each is prefaced by biographical details of the eyewitnesses. Schröder also signposts here the key discussion points in order to give the reader a sense of the interview's shape and direction. These are supplemented with a series of photographs, and in two cases, copies of relevant documents.³⁴⁷ Photographs have been positioned within the opening pages of each interview, depicting the eyewitness in the present (1990s) and also during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. These are further supplemented by additional photographs of the eyewitness and of other members of their family, with only a few exceptions to this pattern.³⁴⁸

The interviews are presented as monologues, (or in the case of the first as a conversation between the Brauns), appearing to follow a stream-of-consciousness narration. Each then follows an identical format. A single line quote provides the title, and is followed by a longer quote. Each eyewitness adopts a conversational style, employing instances of direct and indirect speech, mostly in standard German, with some usage of regional, Berlin dialect. None of the interviews follows a chronological pattern, thus reflecting the format of communicative memory, which as Jan Assmann observes, is notable for its disorganisation and lack of structure.³⁴⁹ The interviews are of a similar length, ranging from twenty-nine to thirty-nine pages. In the first edition, the book ends with the last interview. However, the second edition includes a postscript, which engages with the subsequent developments in historiography.

Structurally, Schröder's text combines elements of different life-writing styles in a work of documentary literature that is largely biographical, but also appears to contain autobiographical elements. A number of factors point towards a biographical format. For example, it is Schröder who introduces the events, shaping and influencing the reader's opinion ahead of their engagement with the eyewitnesses' memories. In

³⁴⁷ The first was a joint interview of Ursula and Gerhard Braun; all subsequent interviews were conducted individually. The documents included relate to only two of the eight interviewees, and are positioned accordingly within the text.

³⁴⁸ There are no photographs of the last witness, Elsa Holzer and only childhood images of Miriam Rosenberg.

³⁴⁹ Assmann, *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, p.129.

addition, where Schröder's authorial voice is present she refers to the eyewitnesses in the third person singular. She also makes use of multiple types of evidence in the form of the aforementioned photographs and documents in order to validate the eyewitnesses' accounts, and cross-references details with primary and secondary sources. Simultaneously, however, the eyewitnesses' testimony appears to be presented as autobiography.³⁵⁰ Schröder's voice is absent during the interviews, which creates the illusion of a relationship between the eyewitness and the reader whereby the former bears witness and the latter assumes the role of the participant observer. Hence, we should consider that Schröder has intentionally removed herself from the picture. This gives the impression that the testimonies conform to the conventions of autobiography in which, according to Phillipe Lejeune, the protagonist, author and narrator are identical.³⁵¹ Rather than the stream of consciousness narration that they appear to be, however, the testimonies are in fact responses to guided and structured interview questions. Removing the author's voice allows the narrative to appear unstructured, to let the facts speak for themselves, as it were. Yet it conceals the way in which each narrative has been constructed, whilst heightening the sense of reality through recourse to the familiar structure of communicative memories.³⁵² I therefore consider the text as biographical rather than autobiographical.

ii) **Reading *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* in the Context of Generational Trends**

Originally from Lower Saxony, Nina Schröder studied in Munich and Berlin but is now based in Bruneck in the South Tyrol.³⁵³ Since publishing *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* she has contributed to, and edited a number of other works.³⁵⁴ She has

³⁵⁰ We note that there is little which is autobiographical from Schröder's perspective. The only time she integrates herself into the narrative is in the summary preceding Elsa Holzer's interview, in which she recounts their meeting, highlighting Elsa Holzer's reluctance to be interviewed (pp.262-264).

³⁵¹ Lejeune proposed the autobiographical pact in his 1989 work *On Autobiography*, cited here in Saynor, *Women Without a Past*, p.7.

³⁵² For a detailed discussion of life-writing styles, see: Smith, S., and Watson, J., 2012. *Reading autobiography: A guide for interpreting life narratives*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2nd edition.

³⁵³ According to the author biography on Raetia.com's website Schröder studied German, Theatre Studies, Art History and Politics. See: Anon: Nina Schröder. Bozen: Edition Raetia. Available from: <http://www.raetia.com/de/autoren/item/1408-schroeder-nina.html> [Accessed 25 March 2013].

³⁵⁴ Amongst other works Schröder contributed to the following edited volumes: Solderer, G., 1999. *Abschied vom Vaterland*, Edition Raetia; Solderer, G., 2000. *Faschistenbeil und Hakenkreuz*, Edition

not, however, returned to the subject of the Rosenstraße protest since 2003. Her more recent works focus on the South Tyrolean region, yet they do indicate a continuity with her earlier work on Rosenstraße, in so far as they are concerned with questions of history and identity, and with the impact of fascism – in both its German and Italian variants – on everyday life.

Generational shifts and patterns have, as we have already seen in this thesis, played a role in the representations of the protest. However, generational identity is somewhat complex. Aleida Assmann characterizes generation as “a group of individuals who are of more or less the same age that have witnessed the same decisive historical events” and that a generation shares “a common frame of beliefs, values, habits and attitudes.”³⁵⁵ Born in 1961, Schröder arguably belongs to the third post-war generation, a factor that is reflected in her writing. Anne Fuchs suggests that even though members of the third generation have a greater historical and emotional distance to the events of the Third Reich, it nevertheless remains symbolically charged for them.³⁵⁶ However, she also suggests that the combination of historical distance and new national confidence has facilitated a less accusatory dialogue over the past, which takes the form of a transgenerational dialogue between members of the first experiential and third generations.³⁵⁷ It is this trans-generational dialogue we see played out over the course of *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*. Schröder’s text conforms to the trends and traits that are symptomatic of third generational memorial engagement with the Nazi past – namely a rejection of National Socialism, a demonstration of empathy for members of the first generation, along with a tendency towards stylising Germans as victims of Hitler and of the war.³⁵⁸

We may also identify the presence of post-memory in Schröder’s text. Post-memory, the concept defined by Marianne Hirsch, refers to the intergenerational transmission of memories, in which memories of the generation who experienced personal and

Raetia. She has also published a number of travel guides to the region as well as a volume of Christmas stories in 2004 under the title: “*weißt du was schnee ist/frisch gefallener*” Edition Raetia.

³⁵⁵ Assmann, A., 2004. Four Formats of Memory: From Individual to Collective Constructions of the Past. In: C. Emden and D. Midgely eds., *Cultural Memory and Historical Consciousness in the German Speaking World Since 1500*. Bern, Berlin, Oxford and New York: Peter Lang, pp.19-37, here p.23.

³⁵⁶ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.5.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.6-7.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 6-7 and p.11.

collective trauma, are re-told through stories, images and behaviours, but are so intense that they seem to constitute memories belonging to the subsequent generations. Post-memory is mediated not by personal recollection, however, but by an imaginative investment. Whilst Hirsch originally defined this term in relation to the second generation, in her more recent work she has refined the term to include the third generation.³⁵⁹ She argues that it is “an intersubjective transgenerational space of remembrance linked specifically to cultural trauma. It is defined through an identification with the victim or witness of trauma.”³⁶⁰ We find examples of a post-memorial engagement with the events recounted in Schröder’s text in particular in relation to the interplay between photography and narrative, as discussed in what follows.

Whilst this trans-generational dialogue between the first and third generations has been defined as less accusatory, albeit no less emotionally charged, we may speculate that conversely the dialogue between members of the second and third generation could be described as more fraught in *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*. We see evidence of this in the way Schröder heavily criticises the protest’s lack of representation for decades, in what she perceives as the continued reluctance to embrace the narrative, and in the lack of substantial historical research until the end of the decade, (pp.311-312) as if to imply the attitudes of the second generation had in some way prevented the third generation from accessing memories of a more positive legacy.

Generation is also a recurrent theme in the different testimonies. The patterns identified here also mirror broader trends. Several of the eyewitnesses, for example, talk of their own memory suppression in the post-war period, focusing instead on the future.³⁶¹ Gerhard Braun points to the parallel between victims and perpetrators. Alluding to the cultural amnesia which the German psychologists Alexander and Margarethe

³⁵⁹ Her most recent work was published in 2012 under the title: *The Generation of Post Memory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press). See also: Hirsch, M., 2012. Interview with Marianne Hirsch, Author of *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press. Available from: <http://www.cup.columbia.edu/static/interview-marianne-hirsch> [Accessed 24 May 2013].

³⁶⁰ Hirsch, M., 2001. Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory. *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14:1, pp.5-37, here p.10.

³⁶¹ Gerhard and Ursula Braun, Gad Beck and Lilo Merten all refer, to varying extents, to their own tendency to suppress memories of the time.

Mitscherlich identified as an ‘inability to mourn’,³⁶² he suggested that both groups similarly tried to repress memories of the Third Reich, albeit for different reasons (p.86). Whilst most eyewitnesses suggest they no longer suppressed their memories by the time the interviews took place, Elsa Holzer indicates that the desire to draw a line under the past, a *Schlußstrich*, remains prevalent amongst the first, experiential generation. With candid self-honesty she includes herself in this, remarking that she nevertheless feels unable to do so.

Gerhard and Ursula Braun also discuss issues of generational remembering. They note the difficulties between generations in conveying the past (pp.67-68) and also that both the second and third generations prompted them to confront the past, remarking in particular on the intensity of the third generation’s interest (p.86 and p.90). The Brauns, in turn, state that they are more comfortable talking with the third generation than even with members of their own; where discussion with members of the third generation turns to the subject of the Nazi past, the Brauns observe that they typically approach it with more of an emotionally detached, and pragmatic approach, which in turn makes it easier for them to discuss it (p.94). We can see that the patterns in Schröder’s text thus largely fall in line with broader trends of the 1990s. What stands out from this pattern, however, is the introduction of a critical stance towards members of the elder, first generation witnesses in the way that they recalled the events in Rosenstraße. Interestingly, this is also found in the Brauns’ testimony, in which they suggest members of their elder generation showed a tendency to exaggerate in order to feel self-important (p.90). Hence we see a multitude of generational dynamics working in Schröder’s text.

iii) Eyewitness Biographies

In order to contextualise the analysis that follows, biographical summaries of the eight eyewitnesses are provided below. By the time of their interviews with Schröder, we note that several had already provided testimony to popular historian Gernot Jochheim,

³⁶² For more information on this see: Mitscherlich, A., and Mitscherlich, M., 1967. *Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern. Grundlagen kollektiven Verhaltens*. Munich: Piper. Notably, it is for different reasons that perpetrators and victims felt they had an inability to mourn.

American historian Nathan Stoltzfus, and to a number of journalists.³⁶³ Consequently, some aspects of their testimonies may be familiar certainly to readers with a prior knowledge of the protest.

Schröder's first interview concentrates on Ursula (née Kretschmer) and Gerhard Braun. Both were classified as partial Jews in 1933, but in different categories. As the daughter of a Catholic father and Jewish mother, who was raised as a Catholic, Ursula was considered to be a partial Jew in the second degree, meaning that she was discriminated against to a lesser extent and at a later stage than partial Jews in the first degree and full Jews.³⁶⁴ Gerhard, however, as the son of a Jewish father and protestant mother, who was raised as a Jew, was classified as a partial Jew in the first degree. He was officially exempted from deportation on the basis of his parents' intermarried status, but was conscripted into the forced labour programme at the age of fourteen and later detained in Rosenstraße.³⁶⁵ Ursula was amongst those who gathered in Rosenstraße, and who returned almost every day, until Gerhard was released. In addition, the couple also participated in resistance activities, helping Jews living illegally to survive.³⁶⁶

Schröder's second interview focuses on Erika Lewin. As the daughter of a protestant mother, and an officially 'stateless' Jewish father, Erika was considered a partial Jew in the first degree, and conscripted into forced labour.³⁶⁷ Erika was detained in Rosenstraße, and spent some of this detention in solitary confinement. Following her release, she returned to forced labour but in late 1944 was to be deported.³⁶⁸ However, she narrowly escaped and went into hiding until the final days of the war.

³⁶³ Notably, neither Jochheim nor Stoltzfus placed any emphasis on the doubts about the protest's success that the eyewitnesses raised. Ursula Braun remarked at the discussion forum in 1992 that Stoltzfus wanted her to believe that the protest had secured the detainees' release. See: Schumm, G., Interview Frau und Herr B. Berlin. Available from: http://www.rosenstrasse-protest.de/interviews/interview_b%26b.html [Accessed 1 October 2004].

³⁶⁴ At the time of the Factory Action Ursula had not yet been conscripted into the forced labour programme, but had been by the latter stages of the war.

³⁶⁵ Gerhard's elder brother, and Ursula's elder sister both partial Jews like their siblings, married each other and as a consequence lost the protection of their parents' intermarried status. They were considered full Jews by the regime and were deported along with their daughter in 1942.

³⁶⁶ They do not state whether this was part of an organised group or not.

³⁶⁷ Erika's father was born in the United States to an American father and German mother. They moved to Germany when he was two, but the US government officially rescinded his citizenship after he had fought for the German Army during the First World War. He was considered a stateless citizen until his death. Erika was only granted German citizenship in 1987.

³⁶⁸ Ill health caused Erika to be absent from her work. Absence due to illness was used as a reason for the deportation of forced labourers.

Schröder's third and fourth interviews focus on the twins Gad Beck and Miriam Rosenberg. Born to a Christian mother, who had converted to Judaism when she married, and to an Austrian Jewish father, they were considered partial Jews in the first degree and arrested during the Factory Action. Whilst Gad was taken straight to Rosenstraße, where he served as an orderly, Miriam was first detained in the Herman Göring Kaserne in the Reinickendorf district, and was subsequently transferred to Rosenstraße. Both were released after two weeks and although reclassified into the forced labour programme, they were also actively involved in the Jewish resistance group *Chug Chaluzi*, which originated from the Zionist youth group they had attended for years. They were eventually arrested and detained until the end of the war. They subsequently emigrated to Israel, although Gad eventually returned to Berlin in 1979.³⁶⁹

Schröder's fifth interview focuses on Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt. The son of a protestant, aristocratic mother and Jewish father, Hans-Oskar was categorised as a partial Jew in the first degree. He was detained in Rosenstraße alongside his father. Following his release, he and his parents involved themselves in the same underground resistance group as Gad and Miriam Beck, and fled into illegality themselves in 1944 to evade capture. Hans and his parents were subsequently arrested, however, and detained until the end of the war.³⁷⁰

Schröder's penultimate interview focuses on Lilo Merten, who as the daughter of a protestant mother, and Jewish father was classified as a partial Jew in the first degree. However, she managed to evade arrest during the Factory Action. Her father, however, was arrested and detained in Rosenstraße, and her mother joined in with the protest, whilst Lilo was kept in hiding at home. After the war her parents divorced. She and her mother emigrated to Israel, but returned to Berlin in the late 1970s.

Schröder's final interview focuses on Elsa Holzer (née Klob). Born into a protestant family, Elsa married Rudi Holzer, an Austrian Catholic of Jewish descent in 1929. Their marriage was deemed to be non-privileged. Rudi was arrested during the Factory Action and detained at Rosenstraße. Elsa joined the protest, and attended every day,

³⁶⁹ Weinthal, B., 2012. Mit Israel-Flagge unterm Regenbogen. Er war Jude und offen schwul. Der einstige NS-Widerstandskämpfer und langjährige Aktivist Gad Beck ist am vergangenen Sonntag in Berlin gestorben. *taz*, 26 June, p. 28.

³⁷⁰ He has a further connection to Germany's resistance heritage. His mother's cousin, Wolfgang Graf Helldorf, was executed for his involvement with the 20th July Plot.

until he was released. Rudi survived the Third Reich but died in 1954. Elsa remained in Berlin.

iv) The Use of Photographic Images within the text

Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen includes, as I indicated above, a number of photographs of the eyewitnesses at various stages in their lives, along with images of their relatives. The inclusion of photographs is perhaps a standard practice in biographies. Whilst not unique they are, however, an essential feature of Schröder's text and serve several important functions. As we saw in Chapter 3, photographs provide an 'evidential force', which lends authenticity to the account or accounts presented in any given context.³⁷¹ This is especially significant with regard to accounts of the protest. These images add a sense of reality, reinforcing that the events – however unthinkable – did actually take place. Describing the protest as unthinkable, or unbelievable has become commonplace. Schröder is just one of many who describes the fact that Germans took to the street to defend German Jews as unthinkable or unbelievable, especially in the context of what we know about Jewish persecution, the Holocaust, and the lack of German resistance to it. That the protest went against the grain may make it appear implausible, which, in turn, heightens the need for authenticity, for verification. Using photographs alongside the testimonies helps to provide this.

Yet, herein also lies a particular difficulty. If we consider the representations of the Rosenstraße protest in relation to other key resistance narratives, it becomes apparent that where the latter are concerned, images of the individuals involved are so well known they may well be considered iconic, ingrained in public imagination. As Marianne Hirsch remarked in a recent interview, photographs “quickly acquire symbolic significance and thus they are more than themselves.”³⁷² If we think of the Weiße Rose, for example, we can immediately conjure up images of Hans and Sophie

³⁷¹ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.85.

³⁷² Hirsch, M., 2012. *Interview with Marianne Hirsch, Author of The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press. Available from: <http://www.cup.columbia.edu/static/interview-marianne-hirsch> [Accessed 24 May 2013].

Scholl.³⁷³ Such images stand metonymically for German resistance to National Socialism. Yet, in the late 1990s the same did not hold true for the Rosenstraße protest. Mention of the protest would most likely not have triggered images of specific people in an individual's mind; although latterly we may argue it would conjure up images from von Trotta's film instead. This in itself reflects the influence of cultural representation and the perpetual re-shaping of collective memory. To return to the issue at hand, however, we see that the Rosenstraße narrative deviated from the norm in this regard. We could even argue that whilst images of the street and of the former Jewish Community building have gradually become iconic in their own right, images of individuals have not.³⁷⁴ The fact that Schröder uses a variety of images of eyewitnesses and other family members goes some way to verifying how the individuals involved looked at the time of the protest and helps to provide the necessary 'evidential force'.³⁷⁵

The inclusion of photographs, however, serve more than verification purposes. They are also used to feed the reader's imagination, and engender an imaginative, post-memorial investment, establishing a bond between reader and eyewitness. Schröder uses photographs from before or during the Third Reich, but also incorporates contemporary photographs of the eyewitnesses. This enables the reader to imagine them at the time of the protest but also as members of today's society, making them seem perhaps more real and also identifiable with, someone you could imagine having a conversation with. This imaginary bond between reader and eyewitness is reinforced through the positioning of the images within the text. Within the opening three pages in all but one of the interviews, photos have been inserted into the text. Contemporary photos are positioned in the biographical summary so that the reader can become acquainted with each individual in turn. All subsequent photos appear at intervals towards the beginning and end of each interview.

³⁷³ Images of the Scholl siblings and fellow members of the group have become well known not least because of their elder sister Inge Scholl's text *Die Weiße Rose* and Inge Jens's edited collection of Hans und Sophie Scholl's letters and notes. See: Scholl, I., 1997. *Die Weiße Rose*, 5th Edition. Frankfurt a.M: Fischer Taschenbuchverlag; Jens, I., ed., 1984. *Hans und Sophie Scholl Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* Frankfurt a.M: S.Fischer Verlag.

³⁷⁴ I am thinking here of Abraham Pisarek's photograph of the Jewish Community Building on Rosenstraße, and of the turn of the 19th century photograph of Rosenstraße, looking along the street towards the Marienkirche in which the Jewish Community building is visible in the bottom right of the photograph, demarcated by the side street, Heidereutergasse. Although the first edition did not incorporate this image, the second edition made use of it on the front cover.

³⁷⁵ In contrast to Jochheim's popular history, for example, in which there was no immediate need to indicate how the characters – fictional albeit drawn from real people – looked, Schröder's witnesses were genuine, thus perhaps necessitating the need to provide photographic imagery.

Following Barthes' argument that "the nature of Photography is the pose," we need to consider the intention behind the photographs in the text.³⁷⁶ Schröder distinguishes between the types of photographs used; older photographs are smaller in size whilst the contemporary photos are either half or a full page. Older photographs, happy family snapshots in the main, enable the reader to gain a greater impression of the people involved. They depict the witnesses as their younger selves, often as they looked at or around the time of the protest. The fact that they are smaller perhaps reflects their temporal distance from the present, giving the impression of reaching back in time. They are not perhaps less significant because they are smaller, but they are distinct from the contemporary photographs as discussed below. These older photographs facilitate the reader's post-memorial engagement, their imaginative investment; as the eyewitnesses recount their experiences, the reader is able to visualise them as their younger selves, to picture them in their mind's eye, allowing the witnesses' recollections to take on a deeper sense of reality.

In contrast to the old family photos, the contemporary images are intentionally posed. Arguably all of the photos are intended to capture your attention, yet these photos also serve the purpose of drawing you into the narrative. They are mostly close-up black and white images of the eyewitness gazing directly into the camera, or looking slightly away but captured mid-conversation. Each image is accompanied by scant information, identifying only the individual's name and when the photograph was taken.³⁷⁷ Whilst it is informative, it invites further contemplation. This technique has been defined by Marianne Hirsch as the process of enlarging the memorial circle, involving the reader directly in the process of remembering.³⁷⁸ Using close-up portraits in which the individual gazes directly into the camera creates the impression that they are trying to make eye contact, as if looking directly at and talking to the reader. Similarly, where they have been photographed mid-conversation gives the impression of being engaged in a dialogue. This establishes a relationship between reader and witness, connecting them through the process of mutual reflection, namely of the reader to the image and

³⁷⁶ Barthes, *Camera Lucida* pp.78-79 and pp.105-106.

³⁷⁷ The images of Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt tend to be accompanied by more information, but the information provided relates back directly to his testimony. All other photographs follow the above-mentioned format.

³⁷⁸ Hirsch, *Projected Memory*, p.7.

the eyewitness to the camera and thus to the reader. With this visual stimuli providing a connection to the past, the reader, for instance, may reflect on the myths surrounding the protest, associating them with the individuals depicted in the image, thus imbuing the myths and ideas with a sense of realness.

In addition, we should bear in mind that the cover images are also significant. Schröder makes use of photographic images here, too. In the first edition, the front cover depicted the same black and white image twice, once above and once below the main title banner. It showed a number of women gathered on an unidentified street, some of whom are looking sorrowful, one of whom looks directly, harrowingly into the camera, others look away or cast their eyes downwards, whilst another appears to be passing through the street, impeded somewhat by the presence of the women in the foreground. In the second edition this photograph is used once, at the top, whilst an image of Rosenstraße at the turn of the 19th century has been positioned below the title banner. This associates the one image with the other, and may suggest that the scene at the top took place in the location below, ergo that the photograph at the top captures an image of the protesters as they waited for their husbands' release.³⁷⁹ Yet, this is not, and could not be the case, given that no image of the protest is known to exist.³⁸⁰ A closer examination illustrates that without doubt this is not Rosenstraße, hence the photograph does not show the protest it purports to. The women in this image stand in front of a large building, possibly a church surrounded by high railings, yet even a cursory glance at the image of Rosenstraße reveals that no such building existed there. Hence this photograph provides proof of the other side of photography, namely its potential to falsify and deceive the reader.

What a photograph represents is therefore derived from its context. J.J. Long suggests that the text, which situates the photograph historically and geographically, may also mislead, undermining the documentary reliability of the photographic image.³⁸¹ Here we see how the title page situates the photograph in Berlin in 1943, implying that it

³⁷⁹ The image of Rosenstraße at the turn of the 19th century had also been used by Jochheim and also provided the cover image for the 1999 translated version of Nathan Stoltzfus' monograph *Widerstand des Herzens*.

³⁸⁰ In her 1984 article *The Camera as Weapon: Documentary Photography and the Holocaust*, S., *Wiesenthal Center Annual*, 1, pp.47-63, Sybil Milton indicated that a photograph of the protest did indeed exist, however this is likely an error as to date no image has ever been found.

³⁸¹ Long, 'History, Narrative and Photography', p.117.

shows intermarried German women in the process of opposing the regime. The photograph appears to authenticate the text; it becomes a part of the visual post-memory of the events in Rosenstraße and yet it deceives. If we look back to Chapter 3, we see that the photograph is meaningless until it is contextualised by language. This ties in with Marianne Hirsch's position that the photograph functions as an empty signifier onto which meaning is projected.³⁸² It is through its referentiality to the text that the photograph may be explained, or at least so it seems. If an image, such as this one, does not illustrate what it appears to, the question of what it actually shows needs to be asked.

This image is particularly revealing when we consider what it actually shows. The photograph depicts neither the protest in Rosenstraße, nor any other act of public resistance. In fact, its usage in this particular context is highly problematic. Far from the protest that this photograph purports to depict, it in fact shows a deportation, albeit one that took place some five years before the Factory Action. According to picture archive company akg-images (*Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte*), which provided the image, the photograph shows the deportation of Polish Jews from Nuremberg in 1938 following the November pogrom.³⁸³ Yet, the reader is invited to imagine that they are gazing at the protest in Rosenstraße, at opponents to the regime, when in fact they are looking at its victims. The photograph thus falsely ratifies the events it supposedly depicts, overlaying the original image by assigning it a different meaning. National Socialist's victims are effectively 'Germanised', as they are taken for the protesters indicated in the book's title. The use of the image in this context is paradoxical in so far as it adopts an image of Jewish victims to portray non-Jewish opponents. Yet, this detail remains largely unknown.

³⁸² Hirsch, *Surviving Images*, p.16.

³⁸³ Information on this image was kindly supplied by akg images (*Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte*), London. Email from Ute Krebs to the author of this thesis Krebs, U., (ute@akg-images.co.uk), 2 October 2008. *Die Frauen der Rosenstrasse*. Email to H.J. Potter (H.J.Potter@bath.ac.uk).

2) Thematic Analysis of Nina Schröder's *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*

i) Breaking an Alleged Taboo

As we saw in Chapter 2, the idea that a taboo had existed around the Rosenstraße protest, which had prevented its incorporation into collective memory until after unification, was a recurrent matter of debate amongst professional historians from the mid-1990s onwards. Notions of a taboo also recur in *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*, demonstrating the interrelated nature of the different representations in discourses of memory and emphasising that they influence and build upon one another. The evocation of the taboo theme again points to the influence of Nathan Stoltzfus' work in particular on the shape and content of Schröder's text. That she perpetuates the idea that the memories of the Rosenstraße protest had been suppressed because they were ill fitting, indicates just how deeply embedded this interpretation had become by the late 1990s. In the introduction Schröder argued:

Es blieb verdächtig ruhig um die Rosenstraße, nicht zuletzt wohl auch deswegen, weil niemand wirklich wahrhaben wollte, was die Frauen dort bewiesen hatten: daß nicht jeder Widerstand unmöglich und von vornherein zum Scheitern verurteilt gewesen wäre (pp.10-11).

Whilst Schröder's statement maintained what was then the dominant reasoning for the protest's belated inclusion into collective memory, *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* also pointed to a distinctive shift in attitudes compared with earlier representations. Although the taboo theme is taken up by Schröder and several of the eyewitnesses, we see that the author's interpretation is, in this regard, somewhat at odds with several of the eyewitnesses' memories. Schröder suggests responsibility for "das lange Schweigen" (p.34) around the protest lies solely with Germans and their continuing prejudices towards intermarried German Jews, suggesting that they remained equally as ill-fitting for Germany's „Geschichtsbewältiger“ as they had to the National Socialists (p.35). By implication, Schröder inferred that memories of intermarriage, and therefore the protest, may have been deliberately ignored and were only now coming to light, thanks to a few journalists and historians such as Nathan Stoltzfus (p.34).³⁸⁴

³⁸⁴ This idea is perhaps also further reinforced in Schröder's inaccurate claim that 1993 was the first occasion on which the protest was officially commemorated on a large scale, and occasion for this was the unveiling of Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture. Regardless of whether this inaccuracy resulted from a

However, eyewitnesses Gerhard and Ursula Braun, along with Gad Beck, add new dimensions which go some way to contradicting and certainly modifying Schröder's own stance. They indicate that memory trends – in East, West and unified Germany – played a role in the protest's lack of widespread recognition. Gerhard and Ursula Braun also attribute its emergence to generational trends, as the dialogue below between Ursula and Gerhard Braun, suggested:

Gerhard Braun: Aber daß es auch einen Widerstand von sogenannten normalen Menschen gegeben hatte, einen Widerstand, der möglicherweise sogar von Erfolg gekrönt war, das paßte in der Nachkriegszeit nicht ins Bild.

Ursula Braun: Heute ja auch nicht.

Gerhard Braun: Da sehe ich den Wandel. Schon allein deswegen, weil mit einem Mal auch die Öffentlichkeit und die Medien an diesen Ereignissen interessiert sind und sich der Sache sehr intensiv angenommen haben ... und vor allem weil junge Menschen sich dafür interessieren (p.85).³⁸⁵

Similarly, Gad Beck suggests that the impetus for the subject's emergence stems from shifts in patterns of remembering, but attributes this first and foremost to the political Left, and initiatives in the GDR in the 1980s towards investigating the state's Jewish heritage, which included examining the Rosenstraße protest.³⁸⁶ He stated:

Wir haben erst jetzt begonnen, über die Rosenstraße zu reden, und zwar nur, weil die Christen es wollten, speziell die linken.³⁸⁷ Hochinteressant ist auch, daß der Impuls, das Ganze wieder in die Öffentlichkeit zu bringen, ursprünglich

simple lack of knowledge, or by intent, it is potentially misleading. We know for example that Jewish Community first began commemorating the protest annually in the late 1980s, that in 1992 and 1993 temporary exhibitions were held, which drew further press attention. Lastly, we also know that whilst Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture was nearing completion in 1993, it was not installed until October 1995. See her interview with Miriam Rosenberg, p.174, Footnote 4.

³⁸⁵ The theme of generation is addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

³⁸⁶ Whilst Beck points out that Ingeborg Hunzinger obtained funding for her project, other initiatives included Rózà Berger-Fiedler's documentary and the Jewish Community's commemorative initiative. On the shift in focus towards examining the Jewish past in the GDR, and the reasons behind it, see: Kessler, M., 2002. Anti-Semitism in East Germany 1952-1953. In: L. Morris, and J. Zipes, eds. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis, 1945 – 2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 141-154.

³⁸⁷ As Schröder explains, Beck's use of the term Christian in this context has little to do with religious identity, rather it is employed here to refer to 'the other'. He suggests that to describe this 'other' as German would be too imprecise, and would infer that Jews were not also German. (p.143, Footnote 5).

sogar von ganz links, vom Osten, ausging. Schon vor einiger Zeit, das ist jetzt mindestens zwölf Jahre her, kamen sie dort auf die kluge Idee, die Geschichte wieder auszugraben. Erich Honecker hat damals der Bildhauerin Ingeborg Hunzinger den Auftrag gegeben, ein Denkmal zu schaffen.³⁸⁸ Das war gar nicht ungeschickt von ihm. Denn Vergangenes ist nie wirklich schlimm. Er konnte sagen: „Tapfere Frauen.“ Das paßte in das kommunistische Bild: tapfere, einfache Frauen. (pp. 143-144).

Thus, we can see the emergence of a more diverse picture, and whilst author and eyewitnesses all agree that the protest was ill-fitting for a long time, the latter go some way towards modifying the stance of the former, removing the inference of intent behind the protest's absence from collective understanding.³⁸⁹ Moreover, we can also note a diversification in the reasons for the protest's emergence, which downplays the emphasis on any one individual effectively 'breaking the taboo'. This allows the reader to understand the protest's emergence as the result of several interrelated factors.

In addition, the eyewitnesses offer a further explanation for the protest's long absence. We know that Schröder attributes this to Germany's „Geschichtsbewältiger“, and that the eyewitnesses took into account the different memory trends. However, the eyewitnesses argued that the Jewish Community shared at least some responsibility for the protest's lack of recognition earlier. This marks a departure from previous interpretations, which have shied away from any direct criticism of either individuals or Jewish institutions, perhaps because it was considered imprudent to accuse German Jews of neglecting victims of Nazism, particularly where this concerned issues of identity, of who could be defined as a Jew, and who not. The fact that these criticisms were raised by members, or former members of Berlin's Jewish Community (that they are therefore seen to come from within) perhaps rendered them more acceptable, or at least less inflammatory. Gerhard Braun recollects the post-war Jewish Community's

³⁸⁸ There is no evidence to suggest Erich Honecker was personally involved in the decision to award Ingeborg Hunzinger funding for her project. However, the state had launched an initiative in 1988 entitled “Competition for a Monument Complex to Honour the Effects of Jewish Citizens in Berlin, to Remember their Persecution and to Honour the Resistance”, which ran for two years. It seems likely that within this context, her proposed project would have been viewed favourably.

³⁸⁹ We may speculate that taking the position that they have been denied and feel they must therefore aggressively confront and defend certain legacies is symptomatic of members of the third generation, such as Schröder.

dislike of intermarriage, which translated into a disinterest in the Rosenstraße protest.³⁹⁰

He states:

Sie [die Jüdische Gemeinde] war auch an der historischen Aufarbeitung der Ereignisse in der Rosenstraße nicht sonderlich interessiert. Sie engagiert sich zu diesem Thema erst seit drei Jahren – seit das Denkmal steht. Man war nicht interessiert, weil es, vereinfacht gesagt, eine Tat der christlichen Frauen war (p.95).

Similarly, Gad Beck suggests that from the perspective of Jewish survivors, detention in Rosenstraße was understandably incomparable to their experience of Auschwitz, that it was seen historically as a second rate matter. He recalls:

Denn als die wenigen Überlebenden aus Auschwitz zurückkamen, haben sie gesagt: ‘Die aus der Rosenstraße sollen doch ganz ruhig sein, das war doch gar nichts. Ich war in Auschwitz! Wir haben das Wort, die Opfer, die wahren Opfer.’ Gerade jetzt erst wieder hat das jemand zu mir gesagt, im vergangenen Jahr (p. 142).

By including criticisms of the Jewish Community, and explaining the prevailing attitudes particularly of the post-war period, in which it was feared that recognising the suffering of those detained at Rosenstraße may detract from the greater suffering of concentration camps survivors (pp.142-143), the reader is able to gain an insight into the perspective of the Jewish Community.³⁹¹ Yet, emphasising that intermarried and so-called partial Jews were sidelined at best, and excluded at worst, from the Jewish Community, drew a parallel with the Third Reich. Defining Jewish post-war identity on the principles of the law of descent (*jus sanguinis*), excluding anyone who was not ‘truly Jewish’ by birth, bore an uncomfortable comparison to the ideas of racial purity, of the *Volkgemeinschaft* from which the National Socialists had explicitly excluded

³⁹⁰ Gerhard and Ursula Braun married shortly after the war. Even though Ursula herself was the daughter of a Jewess, she had been raised as a Catholic, and they married in accordance with Catholic rather than Jewish tradition. Although Gerhard didn’t convert to Catholicism at the time, he explains he was increasingly alienated from the Jewish Community because of his marriage. He eventually converted in the 1990s. (p.95).

³⁹¹ For a comparative view of the situation in the first post-war years see: Grossmann, A., 2002. Home and Displacement in a City of Bordercrossers: Jews in Berlin 1945-1948. In: L. Morris, and J. Zipes, eds. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis 1945-2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 63-100.

German Jews as their ‘other’.³⁹² Hence the eyewitnesses’ comments draw attention to their earlier reluctance towards recognising intermarried German Jews and thus also the Rosenstraße protest. This adds to our understanding, and illustrates the problematic nature of remembering these events, both from a Jewish and a non-Jewish perspective. However, it also underlines that as the temporal distance from the events increases, so too does the openness to a more diverse remembering.

Advocating this critical remembering, however, may have engendered or perpetuated negative feelings, tapping into latent anti-Semitic sentiments that had recently found their expression in the Goldhagen debate.³⁹³ Not only did the Jewish Community’s earlier reluctance to recognise Rosenstraße suggest that intermarried and partial Jews had been denied recognition, but that it also had prevented recognition of their non-Jewish spouses. That the Community only turned its attention towards the events once it had been prompted to do so by non-Jewish Germans, however, suggested two things. Firstly, it indicated that there might be some lingering reluctance towards the narrative. Secondly, it drew a parallel between the actual events and their subsequent representation. It suggested that if Germans had rescued intermarried and partial Jews in Rosenstraße in 1943, they had once again been able to rescue intermarried and partial Jews (along with themselves), only this time from historical obscurity.

ii) **Rehabilitating Ordinary Germans**

Throughout the 1990s, as we know, the role of the ordinary German became a focus of considerable attention, demonstrating openness towards confronting aspects of the past that, as Bill Niven has suggested, Germans had previously tended to avoid.³⁹⁴ In *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* both Schröder and the eyewitnesses refer to the criminality of ordinary Germans. However, they also show a tendency to externalise guilt and responsibility, apportioning blame on the regime’s elites instead, as if to suggest that Germans had mostly been misled. This indicates an on-going reluctance towards

³⁹² The comparison of Nazi and Jewish definitions of identity was taken up by von Trotta in her filmic interpretation of the events, and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

³⁹³ For a discussion of Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism in contemporary Germany see: Benz, W., 2002. Jewish Existence in Germany from the Perspective of the Non-Jewish Majority. Daily Life between Anti-Semitism and Philo-Semitism. In: L. Morris, and J. Zipes, eds. *Unlikely History. The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis 1945-2000*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp.101-117.

³⁹⁴ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.3.

accepting culpability but also points to a disinclination on the part of National Socialism's victims to continue seeing Germans solely in the role of the perpetrator, as we see in the examples below. In the introduction Schröder's explanation for the lack of resistance indicates this apologetic tendency. She argued:

Nach einem Jahrzehnt systematischer und gewaltsamer Meinungsunterdrückung hatte sich die Überzeugung in den Köpfen der Deutschen festgesetzt, daß offener Widerstand erstens völlig sinnlos wäre und zweitens schnell das Leben kosten könnte (p.11).

In her view, therefore, Germans had been suppressed by the regime, hence they could be deemed reprehensible, but excusable. If the ordinary German could be thus exculpated, then responsibility could be passed back to the regime, and the ordinary German rehabilitated. It is a familiar position pointed out in Chapter 3. It also directly contradicts the idea that was prevalent, as we know, at that time of accepting responsibility for past criminality, whether by perpetration, or inaction. Several of the eyewitnesses, however, concurred with Schröder's stance. Discussing opposition, for example, Ursula Braun remarked:

Aber wer hatte schon diesen Mut? Es gab immer viel, viel mehr, die sich von den Juden distanzierten. Das ist am Ende auch verständlich. Denn man konnte etwas tun, ja! Aber immer unter Einsatz des eigenen Lebens. Das war mir auch klar, als ich in die Rosenstraße ging. Die Frauen, die da waren, waren alle aus ganz persönlichen Gründen da. Für sie war das lebensnotwendig, denn da waren ja ihre Männer, ihre Kinder eingesperrt! Was ich sagen will: Dieser Satz 'Da konnte man nichts tun ist ein zutreffender Satz', wenn man ihn auf die Allgemeinheit bezieht. [...] Es gab welche, die persönlich interessiert waren, wie zum Beispiel die Menschen vor der Rosenstraße. Aber die große Menge guckt, daß sie einigermaßen durchkommt (pp.87-88).

Ursula Braun's observations paralleled Schröder's, at least in so far as both suggest Germans were suppressed by the regime and their behaviour is at the very least excusable. Continuing this trend, both Gad Beck and Lilo Merten seem to suggest that Germans' behaviour can be explained, at least to some degree, by the regime's manipulation. Gad Beck talks of the regime's propaganda, of the infamous postcards, which were used to stoke anti-Semitic sentiments by suggesting that deported Jews

were living a far better life than Germans back in the fatherland (pp.193-140). Hence the implication was that Germans had been exploited, unwittingly tricked into believing what they had read, suggesting that they couldn't therefore be held accountable. Lilo Merten similarly suggests that Germans' behaviour can be explained away as the result of regime manipulation. Recollecting the day in which having been identified as a Jewess she was attacked by a gang of youths whilst walking home. She recalls:

Sie kamen drohend in meine Richtung. [...] 'Da is so eene. Die Juden sind an allem schuld', haben die geschrien. Denn sie haben ja jeden Morgen in der Zeitung gelesen, daß die Juden an den Bombardierungen schuld waren; an allem und jedem, was fehlte, waren die Juden schuld. Und plötzlich fingen die Steine an zu fliegen. Ich weiß nicht woher, ich weiß nicht wohin. Und ich weiß auch nicht, wie ich aus der Situation herausgekommen bin (p.249).

Lilo Merten places responsibility for these actions at the regime's door, suggesting that they, not the individuals, are ultimately to blame, advocating understanding for ordinary Germans and their anti-Semitism instead of condemning them.

Excusing Germans, abdicating them from any personal responsibility for their actions indicated that a reluctance to accept everyday complicity persisted in spite of – or perhaps also because of – the intense interest the public had shown for the subject. It also indicated a desire amongst Nazism's victims to re-imagine ordinary Germans as misguided individuals swept up in the fervour of the regime propaganda rather than as perpetrators. This highlights Joanne Saynor's observation that personal memories are refracted through and bound up with dominant historical discourses. Whilst the broader discourses around everyday culpability and complicity provided a framework of reference, we see how the witnesses tended to engage with but also reject the dominant historiographical trend. This continues with the thematisation of the ordinary Nazi, of the ordinary soldier.

iii) Redeeming the 'Ordinary Nazi'?

If ordinary Germans could be excused, then it also seemed as if the 'ordinary Nazi' (i.e. someone who either was not committed to the regime, or who had seemingly redeemed themselves through good deeds) could similarly be reconfigured, and absolved of their

guilt. Gerhard Braun pointed out that those who fought for the Third Reich were by no means committed to its cause; rather, they were simply trying to survive (p.75). Again this contrasts with the then prevailing interest in the criminality of the ordinary soldier. By focusing on a positive aspect, however, the reader is allowed to forget that these 'ordinary Nazis' may well have been complicit, too. Guilt and culpability are once again projected outwards onto the most committed National Socialists. In this regard *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* contrasts starkly with the on-going perpetrators discourse at the time of its publication.

Erika Lewin provides the most salient example in this matter. Recounting her return to Berlin in the final days of the war, she describes how she was aided by a Wehrmacht officer. Mistaken by two soldiers for a child (at the time she was twenty-two) who insisted she could not return alone, she was given into the care of a Wehrmacht officer by chance. This officer, it transpired, had been ordered to drive a group of deserters to their execution, but had no intention of doing so. He also realised that Erika had been living illegally and that this would present a problem, as she had no identity papers. However, when questioned at checkpoints, he claimed that she was his anti-aircraft auxiliary, and when this ruse no longer worked he ordered his chauffeur to speed through the checkpoint so that Erika could evade capture. She recalls:

Und dann hat der Offizier mir gebeichtet, daß er hinten den ganzen LKW voll Soldaten hatte. Die sollten alle erschossen werden, weil sie desertiert waren. Aber er hatte nicht die Absicht, sie abzuliefern. [...] Dann ist er bis zum Alexanderplatz gefahren. Und von da aus zu mir nach Hause war es ja nicht weit. Er ist nach hinten gegangen, hat die Plane hochgemacht und hat alle Soldaten rausgelassen. Er hat nicht einen abgeliefert (pp.127-128).

The reader learns that this is a 'good Nazi' whom Erika had been fortunate to meet. Yet, whilst the reader is invited to reflect on this particular officer's good deeds, they are effectively also invited to forget his culpability, to forget what else he may previously have been guilty of. They may also assume he chose to defy his orders and to rescue Erika out of some sort of moral conviction. Yet, Claudia Schoppmann cautions us to remember that not all people who aided German Jews did so altruistically, but also for personal gain, or as a self-defence mechanism, so that after

the war, they could claim that they had defied the regime.³⁹⁵ In addition, the reader is also discouraged from thinking critically about the deserters, as if to suggest desertion was akin to a rejection of Nazism, even when it may simply have resulted from a lack of will to continue fighting, when the war had evidently been lost. Yet, in Schröder's book, their prior actions are left unquestioned, implying they have been absolved. This contrasts starkly with the focus on the criminality of the ordinary soldier as highlighted in the *Crimes of the Wehrmacht* exhibition, which enjoyed a lot of public interest.

Similarly, Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt acquaints the reader with his Nazi aunt – known as Tante Lie, the aristocratic widow of the last Mayor of Potsdam, who joined the Nazi party early and out of political conviction.³⁹⁶ He explains how she nevertheless supported him and his parents, not only in their day to day lives but also by attending the protest, hiding them at her home after their underground resistance activities had been betrayed to the Gestapo, and even by pleading for his and his father's release after their subsequent arrest in March 1945. Immediately after the war, however, Hans explains, his aunt was taken prisoner by the Russian occupying forces but freed when his father spoke up for her, claiming she saved their lives (p.230). Even though Hans' aunt was an influential party member, she could still be absolved because of her 'good deeds' towards her family. Again the reader is invited to consider only what 'Tante Lie' did for her family rather than reflect critically on her life and actions under Nazism. She is also allowed to appear as a victim herself, arrested by the Russians until rescued by her Jewish brother-in-law.

Further examples of 'ordinary' or 'good Nazis' also appear in the text.³⁹⁷ These testimonies thus contribute to a more differentiated picture of the ordinary Nazi, but they simultaneously detract from the focus on complicity. We note, however, that it is the victims, who seem to excuse all but the worst Nazis, which may also suggest a

³⁹⁵ For a more detailed discussion see: Schoppmann, C., 2002. Rettung von Juden: ein kaum beachteter Widerstand von Frauen. In: B. Kosmala and C. Schoppmann, eds. *Überleben im Untergrund: Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland 1941-1945*. Berlin: Metropol, pp. 109-126.

³⁹⁶ Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt's depiction of his aunt here varies considerably from the version of her that appeared in Jochheim's text in which she was re-imagined as a member of an underground resistance movement, and her involvement in the regime, and belief in its ideology was downplayed.

³⁹⁷ For example, Erika Lewin refers to her neighbour, a civil servant and therefore a member of the party, but implies he was entirely uninterested by their racial politics unlike his wife, whom he kept from causing the Lewin family problems (p.123).

desire for some form of normalization on their part at least, a desire to stop seeing them in dichotomous terms as their ‘other’, as discussed in the following section.

iv) Towards Normalization?

If we apply Taberner’s definition of normalization to Schröder’s text, in which he argues emphasis is placed on past ‘German norms’, on seeking to contextualise the Nazi past and reclaim a positive heritage for the sake of a positive identity,³⁹⁸ we can find evidence of this longitudinal normality in the way in which Schröder focuses on ‘good Germans’, and their values. It is perhaps also evident in the way she uses allegory and myth alongside biblical narratives, relating them to the protesters and their opposition to the regime. In the foreword, for instance, she evokes the image of the Moloch – the God of Canaanites and Phoenicians, the King to whom children were sacrificed in the Book of Deuteronomy, and a monstrous deity in Jewish mythology. Schröder’s reference, however, inverts this legend, so that the Moloch is no longer Jewish, but rather a metaphor for Hitler and Nazism. Schröder remarks:

Der Moloch hatte wieder ausgespuckt, was er beinahe schon geschluckt hatte (p.8).

She then refers to the biblical narrative of David and Goliath similarly to allude to the overwhelming odds faced by the protesters in the face of a monster (p.8). In this analogy the protesters demonstrate true values that are civilisational but they are also German and can thus be seen as a norm of behaviour that not only survived National Socialism untainted but that also defeated it.³⁹⁹

If protest and opposition are, it is implied, inherent to the German national character, it follows that not only can such ‘longitudinal norms’ be located in Germany’s past before National Socialism, but also in its more recent past. In an equation of the Third Reich with the GDR, Schröder claimed:

Was damals in der Rosenstraße passierte, kann beispielsweise nur im Vergleich mit der gewaltlosen Revolte in der ehemaligen DDR, die schließlich zum Fall der Mauer führte, richtig bewertet werden (p.14).

³⁹⁸ Taberner, *German Literature of the 1990s and Beyond*, p.xvii.

³⁹⁹ This also bears comparison with von Trotta’s twinning of Christian and German values in her film, discussed in Chapter 5.

This sweeping comparison, which is problematic not least because it equates the Third Reich with the GDR, also fits with the notion of longitudinal normality, as defined in Chapter One.⁴⁰⁰ Schröder appears to try to establish the idea of protest, or more specifically, of peaceful, non-violent protest as a defining national tradition, one in which Germans may ultimately take pride. This reflected the way longitudinal normality locates ‘German norms’ in its past, and also in the way it selectively picks at the salient aspects of its history in order to reinforce those norms. This may also imply that the origins of the Berlin Republic are to be found in a legacy of protest and resistance against unjust regimes, and hence that it ties into a foundational myth. The term, according to Wolfgang Emmerich, is used to denote the “narratives by which nations and other communities or political movements anchor themselves within (national) history and thus also create a meaningful perspective for the (national) future.”⁴⁰¹ Hence, they create a connection between the past and the present. Schröder, it seems, accords the Rosenstraße protest the status of a potential or fruitful foundational myth for the Berlin Republic.

v) ‘Good Germans’ and Normalization

Further evidence of such normalization, of the norms of behaviour located in Germany’s past, can also be found in the way in which ‘good Germans’, those who showed kindness or humanity, for example, also find a place within several testimonies. Erika Lewin highlights the kindness of her co-workers (pp. 112-115), of the tram conductor who is sympathetic to her after she had been released from Rosenstraße (p.122) and of her neighbours in celebrating her return from Rosenstraße, (p.124) and hiding her father right up to the end of the war (p.128). Lilo Merten cites several examples, including her employer, who informed her mother of the Factory Action, her neighbour and a friend of her mother’s who refused the Gestapo’s entreaties to abandon the family, and the neighbours who denied that any Jews lived in the building when the SS came to arrest Lilo during the Factory Action (pp. 255-257). Similarly, Elsa Holzer explains that her boss, on learning of Rudi’s detention, gave her time off work to

⁴⁰⁰ The early 1990s also saw a resurgence of the totalitarian theory, which argued totalitarianism was the common denominator between the two ideologies and allowed the Third Reich and GDR to be equated with and cancelled out by one another. It seems Schröder may be making a similar comparison here.

⁴⁰¹ Emmerich, W., 2009. Cultural Memory East v. West: Is What Belongs Together Really Growing Together? *Oxford German Studies* 38:3, pp.242-253, here p.244.

participate in the protest, whilst her husband's employer informed her personally of Rudi's arrest. She also recounts how another acquaintance managed to establish where he had been detained (pp. 279-281). The eyewitnesses thus throw the portrayal of Germans who are uniformly anti-Semitic into sharp relief.

The actions of these 'good Germans' are complemented by those who demonstrated solidarity and resistance. To an extent we see continuity with the early 1990s, in so far as the image of the Jewish fighter is also perpetuated here. Gerhard and Ursula Braun, Gad Beck, Miriam Rosenberg and Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt all participated in underground resistance. These individuals were neither passive victims, nor were they entirely dependent on the opposition of non-Jewish Germans, opting to resist the regime themselves, often bringing their non-Jewish relatives into the fold. In addition, we see a deviation from the heroic interpretations of the protest, which may also be seen as further evidence of a desire for normalization, as identified above. The witnesses played down their own opposition. None attempted to place their actions in a heroic light. Nor did they suggest that German-Jewish solidarity was widespread. On the contrary, they inferred that it was, with few exceptions, only really prevalent amongst those directly affected by the regime's racial policy and those already considered social outsiders. Gad Beck's testimony, for example, illustrates the support of his mother's family, and of the gay community in his resistance activities (pp.158-160). The Brauns detail how they were aided by an acquaintance whose loyalty to his former employer, a Jewish doctor, transcended any sense of loyalty to the regime he served, and Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt recounts that a prostitute involved in the *Chug Chaluzi* resistance group, forewarned his family of their impending arrest, enabling them to flee from the Gestapo (p.224-225).⁴⁰²

These examples of 'good Germans', of resistance and solidarity are interwoven in narratives that also emphasise instances of hostility, prejudice and even criminality.⁴⁰³ Rather than idealising solidarity and resistance, the eyewitnesses demonstrated that it was dependent on familial solidarity and on the vested interests of those involved, a factor that previous representations had remained silent about. It also provides

⁴⁰² This latter example also featured in Jochheim's popular history, but is less dramatised in this account.

⁴⁰³ The partial if not total rejection of the non-Jewish partner by their wider family, for example, is a recurrent theme. In addition, Elsa Holzer reveals her belief that her newborn twins were murdered by the midwife who delivered them, p.284.

examples of the inherent contradictions within these memories, which on the one hand indicate a move towards an exculpation of ordinary Germans, yet on the other simultaneously undermine it.

vi) **Negotiating Between Personal and Cultural Memory**

If, as I suggested earlier, the limitations of discourse can be found in the way family or personal memories both intersect with but also differ from official discourses, we can see in *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen* how the eyewitnesses contradicted and challenged memories of the protest that had been established in other representations. This underscores the complex, socially mediated nature of memory and remembering, how it, influences, and is influenced. As this section now examines, these personal memories cast a number of aspects of the Rosenstraße narrative in a new light. This includes questioning the way in which the events were remembered, the issue of the protest's impact, the gendered remembering of the protest, the image of the loyal German woman, and the designation of the protest as an act of resistance. These competing and indeed conflicting memories introduced the wider public to the idea that the protest may have neither succeeded nor in effect constituted an act of resistance, as the book's author, along with a host of earlier representations, had previously indicated. However, the fact that the witnesses' suggestions provoked no critical backlash, as we might reasonably expect, either at the time of the original publication, or its republication in 2003, when historians were being lambasted for suggesting the very same, is intriguing.

What is also noticeable is the way the eyewitnesses' opposing positions closely reflect the divisions between the professional historians, and even replicate some of their arguments. If we consider Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt's account, for example, we see that it closely parallels Nathan Stoltzfus' interpretation.⁴⁰⁴ He, like Stoltzfus, suggested that to conclude that the protest had forced the regime to revise its intentions seemed the most plausible explanation, especially given the timing of the events so close to defeat on the Eastern front, coupled with the effect of the aerial war on public morale (pp.217-219). Conversely, Gerhard Braun's opinion bore comparison with Wolf

⁴⁰⁴ Equally, this interaction can work both ways and it is also possible that Hans-Oskar's interpretation influenced Stoltzfus' own.

Gruner's arguments, concluding that the regime needed time to check the detainees' status. Similarly, Gad Beck's testimony reinforces Gruner's hypothesis that they were to be re-deployed within the forced labour programme, pointing out that he, along with a number of others, was selected for work whilst still at Rosenstraße (p.157).

The above examples underline the way in which memories are social constructs, showing that memory transmission is a dynamic process between communicative and cultural memory. What we see, following Welzer's analogy, is evidence of the complex interplay between personal memories and cultural representation, and this manifests itself here in the adoption of historical interpretations by the eyewitnesses, which, however, have come to be expressed as their own. If we consider that at the time of the original publication, the dominant interpretation was that the protest had successfully forced the Rosenstraße detainees' release, then the witness testimonies countered such memories, indicating their desire to see a shift in cultural memory away from the existing representations. Significantly, of the eight eyewitnesses only two – Miriam Rosenberg and Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt – supported the interpretation that the protest secured the release of the detainees (p.174 and pp.217-219). By contrast Elsa Holzer offered no interpretation (p.282). Lilo Merten expressed some ambiguity, suggesting that much more went on behind the scenes than existing narratives suggest (pp.235-6). At the other end of the spectrum, Gerhard and Ursula Braun, Erika Lewin and Gad Beck disputed the idea that the protest succeeded in securing the detainees' release.

In Schröder's text, in the process of transmitting their personal memories these eyewitnesses reflect but may also contradict narratives of the past, offering alternative readings that go against the grain. They also have the potential to become part of cultural memory as this shifts over time and in response to contestation: what is at one point a counter-memory may later become the dominant interpretation. We have seen this in the shifts in cultural memory where the question of the protest's significance is concerned: some of these memories once challenged the hegemonic reading in the 1990s, whilst others reinforced it, however, the once counter-memories now reflect the prevailing interpretation, underlining the shift in cultural memory and the desire for a more differentiated understanding of the events and their significance in the present.

In addition eyewitnesses also expressed some scepticism over the way in which the protest has been depicted, particularly where it sought to heroise or glorify it. This suggested that the gap between public and private re-imagining was wide. Ursula Braun described the protest as follows:

Getan haben wir in der Rosenstraße gar nichts. Ich bin da hin- und hergegangen. Man hat sich unterhalten [...] Und es blieb einem ja nichts anderes übrig, als hin- und herzugehen. Gut, man hat dabei immer das Portal im Auge behalten, um zu kontrollieren, ob irgend etwas passiert. Aber ansonsten konnten wir nichts machen als herumstehen oder auf und ab gehen (p.82).

Similarly, Erika Lewin also contradicts the heroic narrative. She remarks on the likelihood of any revolt against the regime, suggesting there was really very little the protesters could do. Noting that there were but a few regime opponents, she stated:

Und wer erzählt, man hätte einen Aufstand machen können, der lügt. Auch die in der Rosenstraße haben keinen Aufstand gemacht. Meine Mutti hat mit meiner jüngsten Schwester draußen gestanden. Die waren alle ganz ruhig und vernünftig und haben nur gesagt: 'Gebt uns unser Kinder' oder 'Gebt uns unsere Männer raus' oder 'Gebt uns unsere Frauen zurück'. Randalen machen konnten die dort wirklich nicht, weil sie ihre ganzen Familien in Gefahr gebracht hätten (pp.108-109).

Lilo Merten also downplays the protest, remarking that:

Es war ein Protest, der nicht bekämpft wurde, der nicht unterdrückt wurde. Keine Polizei, keine Gestapo, kein Vertreter der Staatsgewalt wurde da hingeschickt. Man ließ die Frauen dort stehen und unbehelligt demonstrieren (p.235).

These testimonies cast doubt on the heroic image of the protesters that was perpetuated for example by Jochheim, in sections of the press, and to an extent by historians such as Stoltzfus. A number of other aspects of the protest are also contradicted in these testimonies, as the following section highlights, further indicating the extent to which personal and cultural memories differed towards the end of the 1990s.

Ever since the protest first appeared it has been constructed as a women's protest, as an act of female resistance. However, both Gad Beck and Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt would contest this view, reminding the reader that men, including members of the Wehrmacht, also participated in the protest. Gad Beck recalls:

Alle Tanten sind mitgegangen und auch ein Onkel. Und ein anderer Onkel war an der Front gewesen, und als er auf Urlaub zurückkam, hat er nichts Besseres zu tun gehabt, als seine Frau zur Rosenstraße zu begleiten und sie mit dem Auto auch noch dort hinzubringen (p.154).

Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt recounts that whilst his mother, grandmother and aunt participated in the protest, there were also a number of soldiers amongst them, who had returned from the front and now demonstrated on behalf of their wives (pp.212-213). Yet, men have largely been excluded from representations, assigned either the role of the Jewish husband and detainee, or of the non-Jewish husband who abandoned his wife. The eyewitnesses here allow men to be reintegrated into the narrative.

It is not only the form and structure of the protest in Rosenstraße that is called into question, but also the conditions for the detainees inside Rosenstraße. This marked a distinct departure from previous representations. Whilst Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt, Gerhard Braun, Erika Lewin and Miriam Rosenberg recall the appalling conditions in which they were detained, Gad Beck suggests instead that it was orderly, that provisions were given. He describes the conditions inside Rosenstraße as follows:

Die Dinge arteten nie zum Chaos aus, es war nicht einmal schmutzig [...] Es war kein Konzentrationslager. Da waren Türen, die gingen auf und zu. [...] Es herrschte ein lebhafter Betrieb. Man darf sich das nicht so vorstellen, daß die Nazis nur mit Peitschen rumgestanden sind; kein Mensch hat dort gepeitscht. Im Clou, ja, da gab es SS-Leute, die geschlagen haben, aber nicht in der Rosenstraße. Da war es friedlich (p.138).

In addition to contradicting the idea of the conditions within Rosenstraße, the image of the loyal wives who stood by their Jewish husbands is also called into question. Erika Lewin and Miriam Rosenberg both indicate that divorce was commonplace, although they also suggest that this was often undertaken in the belief that divorce would afford children better protection from persecution than if the parents remained married (p.130

and p.182). Yet, when historian Beate Meyer made similar observations several years later, she was heavily criticised.⁴⁰⁵ This raises the question of whether the issue of divorce simply didn't matter at the end of the 1990s, but did subsequently in the early years of the new millennium, and whether what matters here is not the critical memories, but by whom they are articulated.

Several witnesses also go beyond contradicting understanding of the protest, calling into question the significance attributed to the protest and whether it, in fact, constituted resistance at all. Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt characterises the protest as a kind of self-preservation resistance (eine Art Selbsterhaltungswiderstand) that was, however, not a deliberate act of political resistance (p.220). Lilo Merten, questioned whether it was really a protest, commented:

Ich weiß nicht genau, ob sie tatsächlich Protest zum Ausdruck gebracht haben, oder ob sie nur dort gestanden sind. Heute sagt man, sie hätten »demonstriert«. Ich persönlich bezweifle das. [...] Natürlich war die Sache an sich eine Demonstration, aber nicht in unserem heutigen Sinn, nicht von der Art, wie wir sie heute kennen. Das wäre zuviel hineingelegt (p.235).

Of her own mother's involvement, she argued:

Aber das war kein Aufbegehren gegen die Nazis. Quatsch! Sie hat ihren Mann gesucht, nichts weiter. Das wurde nachher so hochgeputscht, aber wirklicher Widerstand war das nicht (p.258).

These comments indicate openness and a confidence towards embracing a more critical stance on the protest. As before, it pointed to the influence of existing interpretations on the eyewitnesses' perspectives. Certainly, Lilo Merten's stance drew a parallel with earlier discussions in historiography, and with Christoph Dipper's criticisms in

⁴⁰⁵ Jah, A., 2005. Tagungsbrichte – Protest in der Rosenstraße/ 28/29.4.2004. *Bulletin für Faschismus- und Weltkriegsforschung*, 24, pp.110-121; Leichsenring, J., 2004. Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943 – Zeitzeugen und Historiker zwischen Akten und Erinnerung. Available from: <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=501> [Accessed 16 December 2005].

particular, as regards the significance that has been retrospectively awarded the protest.

406

The discrepancies these witnesses raised allowed firstly for a greater understanding of the events. The use of personal memories opened up the narrative, allowing it to become more complex and contradictory. In so doing they enabled a reconsideration of the protest, including pre-conceptions about it, and about the Nazi past more generally. It also blurred boundaries, allowing the figure of the Nazi, of the ordinary German, and of the good German to be re-evaluated. These personal testimonies introduced levels of ambiguity that had been lacking in earlier representations, thereby allowing certain myths and interpretations to be contested. In this sense, Schröder's text was somewhat ahead of other cultural representations and trends in the protest's representation.

vii) Shifting Attitudes Between 1997 – 2003? Additions, Alterations and Indications

Upon the publication of the second edition of *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*, a small number of additions and alterations were made. The first, as I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, was an amendment to the title. To a certain degree the title alteration, reflects the heightened public awareness of the protest. The second was the inclusion of a postscript, which pointed to developments in historiography since the book's first publication, along with Schröder's responses to them.

Although Schröder's postscript is brief, it is nevertheless illuminating, particularly with regard to shifting cultural patterns in the early part of the new millennium. Gone for example, is any emphasis on Jewish experience that we had seen throughout the text; this postscript is unmistakably all about the protesters. Its tone is vitriolic, as suggested by the opening lines in which Schröder criticises the press:

Die Häme in dem Artikel des Nachrichtenmagazins *Der Spiegel* ließ sich nur schwer überhören:⁴⁰⁷ Also doch nicht!, klingt es da zwischen den Zeilen. Also

⁴⁰⁶ Dipper, *Schwierigkeiten mit der Resistenz*, p.415. Dipper argued that Stoltzfus' interpretation had implied that for the participants the protest was a political issue, whereas Dipper suggested it was only a political issue for the regime.

⁴⁰⁷ The Spiegel article Schröder referred to here was Christian Habbe's review of Wolf Gruner's research in late 2002. Habbe, C., 2002. 'Wunder und Wahrheit. Die Freilassung von 2000 Berliner Juden aus der

haben diese paar Handvoll Frauen doch nicht geschafft, was dem gesamten deutschen Volk mißlungen war.

Es war beinahe, als käme nun Erleichterung auf, als sich die Nachricht durch den Blätterwald fraß: Die Frauen in der Rosenstraße waren nicht die Ursache für die Befreiung der Internierten. Niemand wollte die Rosenstraße-Häftlinge deportieren. Tatsächlich wären sie nach dem Willen der Machthaber so oder so freigekommen (p.311).

As if to suggest that anger was the only reasonable response to this research, she also claimed:

Als Margarethe von Trotta während der Dreharbeiten zu ihrem Spielfilm über die Rosenstraße auf dem Set in Babelsberg von dieser Nachricht überrascht wurde, war sie einfach nur wütend. ‘Aber das haben die Frauen doch nicht gewußt’, empörte sie sich gegenüber einer anwesenden Journalistin (p.311).

The opening passages thus hint at a defensive aggression towards the critical reinterpretation of the Rosenstraße narrative, as if to suggest that questioning the protest’s impact was an unreasonable course of action that needed to be challenged. This stance would subsequently be reflected in the press attention, by eyewitnesses and in the debate amongst professional historians, as we saw in Chapter 2. This brings us back to Welzer’s approach to the interaction between communicative and cultural memory, and its relation to identity. Questioning the protest’s impact generated such outrage precisely because it challenged memories and with it a sense of self established around the narrative. Yet, this did not only affect the first generation witnesses, rather it also affected the subsequent generations – Schröder included – who had invested imaginatively in these recollections, embraced them as post-memories that were relevant to their own self-image. This renders the vitriol in the postscript more comprehensible. She criticises the press, the state (particularly the Bonn Republic), Germans generally, and lastly historians.

Nazi-Haft galt lange Zeit also Wunder. Wie neueste Forschungen belegen, nicht ganz zu Recht.’ *Der Spiegel*, 49, p.56.

Somewhat ironically, given that personal testimonies form the basis of her own book, she criticises historians' reliance on witness memories, and moreover on ones that were recorded 50 years after the events, as if to suggest they are unreliable or inaccurate. Yet she also goes on to credit historians Wolf Gruner and Susanne Willems with casting the events in a new light.⁴⁰⁸ We can see further contradiction in the way in which Schröder appears to defend the notion of the protest's success vehemently, only to then claim:

Tatsächlich ist die Zuspitzung dieser Frage auf diese Art ziemlich absurd. Denn seit wann wird in Deutschland der Widerstand an seinem Erfolg gemessen? (p. 314)

Similarly, she remarks (in response to Gruner's conclusion about the protesters' courage):

Nun hat man sich in Sachen Rosenstraße auf eine denkbar bigotte Formel geeinigt: 'Damit soll der Mut dieser Frauen nicht geschmälert werden', so heißt es jetzt allenthalben (p.315).

Yet, she goes on to assert that irrespective of the regime's intentions towards the Rosenstraße detainees, the protesters' courage was, and remains, the most extraordinary factor, not their possible or supposed victory (p.316). Whilst she criticises the focus on courage on the one hand, she claims it is the most important factor on the other.

Schröder's postscript points to a clear shift away from the perpetrator discourses that had dominated at the time of the first publication, towards a victimological one. She speculated:

Da drängt sich die Frage auf, ob die Frauen der Rosenstraße nicht vielleicht gerade darum so spät geehrt wurden, weil sie (möglicherweise) Erfolg hatten mit ihrem Häufchen Widerstand. Vielleicht war es immer dies, was die Geschichtsschreibung, aber vor allem die deutsche Öffentlichkeit derart irritierte (pp.314-315).

⁴⁰⁸ Schröder entirely overlooks Beate Meyer's research that was published alongside Wolf Gruner's, however and which focused entirely on the events in Rosenstraße. At the same time she overstated the extent to which Susanne Willems' research actually addressed the protest in Rosenstraße.

Suggesting, as she does, that the issue of their success prevented earlier recognition allows Schröder to present the protesters as victims who had not only previously been denied but who were about to be further denied recognition, their protest unjustifiably downplayed. In this respect, she once again paralleled Nathan Stoltzfus' interpretation. This emotive argumentation suggests that firstly identifying with and defending the protesters is the right thing to do, and secondly that those who cast doubt on the protest's success perpetuate a kind of narrow-mindedness towards these heroic women, and their struggle. This may foster an emotional response and an identification with the women as victims on the part of the reader. Suggesting that the protesters had not only been previously denied recognition, but that there was an on-going reluctance towards recognising their resistance merely served to legitimize Schröder's perspective. Claiming the existence of a taboo does not mean that any such taboo exists, but it does legitimise the focus on the subject matter the author wishes to discuss but perceives may be problematic.⁴⁰⁹ Similarly, suggesting that the protesters had been wrongly denied recognition does not mean that they were, but it does justify the shift in focus towards notions of heroic German suffering, which simultaneously incorporates a move away from the focus on the detainees. This in turn illustrates the way in which Schröder ties into the broader cultural trend towards discourses of German victimhood.

Schröder also railed against the state, its institutions, the press and historians in particular. Her criticisms were directed primarily at the second generation, and its attitudes towards the Nazi past. As we have already seen in this chapter, the transgenerational dialogue between members of the first and third generations showed a willingness for younger Germans to empathise with the first generation. By re-imagining the protesters as heroic victims they become positive role models with whom to identify. Schröder's criticisms may thus indicate a desire amongst members of the third generation to re-imagine Germans as moral victims to whom they may be the legitimate heirs. Defending the protesters against any critical interpretation appears to function as a self-defence mechanism for Schröder's own sense of self, manifesting itself in her argumentative stance. We may speculate that this reflects a wider generational trend, namely that whilst the third generation identify with certain groups from within the first generation (German Jewish victims and resisters) and although

⁴⁰⁹ Schmitz and Seidel-Aparci, *Narratives of Trauma*, pp.4-6.

they may take a critical stance towards other members of that generation for their complicity, it is second generation Germans (for their critical stance towards resistance and previous lack of empathy with members of the first generation) that they blame for obfuscating the opportunity for a positive legacy in the first place, and for now (supposedly) attempting to deny it for a second time, in this instance at least.

3. Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has analysed Nina Schröder's text, *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*, which enabled eight eyewitnesses to recount their experiences of detention and protest in Rosenstraße. This permitted Schröder to question prevailing assumptions about life during the Third Reich, specifically in relation to the German-Jewish relationship, persecution and resistance and thus to contribute to history from below, countering ideas of uniform German anti-Semitism, of guilt and of complicity.

Through the use of photography and by presenting each eyewitnesses account as if in an uninterrupted flow in which their memories spilled forth, Schröder's text gave the impression of creating a trans-generational dialogue, and fostering an emotional identification between the reader and the eyewitness. This shows that the broader cultural trends around ideas of generation and witnessing, of empathy between members of the first and third generations that are characteristic of the 1990s, are also reflected in *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*. At the same time this chapter illustrated how meaning is derived from the context in which each media of memory is used. Whilst photographs in Schröder's text served as a visual aid for the reader, they also helped to establish a sense of authenticity. Yet, as this chapter has shown, this has proven to be false, as the cover photograph does not depict the protest its usage in Schröder's book implies.

Further cultural trends are also indicated. The book's focus on Jewish experience, and on the memories of Nazism's victims (rather than just its opponents) reflects both the preoccupation and the fascination with Jewish life in the 1990s.

Throughout the course of the book, we identified a number of parallels with historian Nathan Stoltzfus' work, and Gernot Jochheim's. We also noted that in their own

interpretation of the events, several of the eyewitnesses also indirectly referenced either Nathan Stoltzfus' or Wolf Gruner's hypotheses. These highlighted how memories are multi-layered and how they built on one another. They also underlined that memory construction is a dynamic between personal and cultural memory, that the boundaries between individual recollection and cultural memories are fluid.

Yet, the focus on history from below, on personal memories also highlighted the gulf between private and public memories of the Nazi past, and of the protest in Rosenstraße. Whilst broader cultural discourses focused on questions of guilt and complicity, Schröder's text sought to question the assumption that Germans were either uniformly anti-Semitic or complicit with the regime. This suggested that whilst officially discourses of contrition emphasised guilt and shame, privately these were rejected in favour of a focus on suffering, particularly that of non-Jewish Germans. In this sense, Schröder's text offered memories, which were therefore broadly appealing, not least because it appeared, as if the victims were excusing the majority of Germans for their complicity with the regime, indicating that German Jews no longer wished to see Germans solely in the role of the perpetrator, as the enemy, rather as a sort of victim, albeit differently from themselves. Here, then, Schröder's text deviated from the broader cultural trends around ordinary Germans and complicity. In fact, we may argue that Schröder's text illustrates a subtle shift towards, or at least a willingness to embrace discourses of victimhood in which all but the worst Nazis could be understood and therefore redeemed.

Lastly, the publication of the second edition reflected the broader cultural shifts towards a focus on German victimhood and suffering, in which Schröder defended the protesters against the critical re-evaluation of the events. In so doing she indicated that, for herself at least, the desire to identify with the protesters, with their positive legacy remained strong in the first part of the new millennium. This pointed to a pattern within memory and identity construction in which the third generation placed the blame for the lack of positive constructions of identity on the second generation, taking a critical stance towards the way in which they have shaped, and indeed continue to influence memories of the Nazi past.

Chapter 5

From the Original Draft to the Cinema Screen: Memory and Identity in Transition in Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*

1.

The nationwide release of veteran German filmmaker Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* on 18th September 2003 was subjected to intense scrutiny, with renowned historian Wolfgang Benz declaring that the film a work of kitsch, a farce that falsified history.⁴¹⁰ In the days immediately afterwards, Benz and von Trotta each deflected and traded accusations before departing the scene and leaving the debate to run its course.⁴¹¹ Benz was not alone in attacking the film. However, his polemical review was the principal catalyst for the intense debate between filmmakers, historians, journalists and eyewitnesses that followed, the intensity of which led to the decision by representatives of the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* together with the *Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand* and *Jüdisches Museum* to convene a two-day conference the following April, but one that von Trotta was not invited to participate in and even Benz only attended briefly.⁴¹²

In the years since its release and the ensuing debate, *Rosenstraße* has continued to engender interest from academics – film and memory studies scholars in particular – and interested parties alike. Numerous analyses have been published, suggesting that *Rosenstraße* subscribes to discourses of normalization, re-imagining “Jewish suffering as ‘Greuelmärchen’ with a happy ending” (Berghahn); that it contributes towards a nostalgic, idealised reconstruction of the German-Jewish symbiosis (Taberner); that it offers an exploration of historical and contemporary perspectives on intermarriage articulated through transgenerational memorial investment (Fuchs); that it is a neo-

⁴¹⁰ Benz, ‘Kitsch, Klamotte, Klitterei’, p.13.

⁴¹¹ See for example: Anon, 2003. ‘Rosenstraßenkrieg. Benz verteidigt sich gegen Trotta’. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 20/21 September, p.13.

⁴¹² Orzessek, A., 2004. ‘Die Wahrheit im Protest; Eine Berliner Tagung zum Streit um die Rosenstraße 1943’. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 May, p.17. Shortly after the conference a similar debate took place, at the behest of Nathan Stoltzfus on the H-Net forum for German history. It was timed to coincide with the US release of von Trotta's film, and lasted approximately three months. See: Boettcher, S., Fischer, C., Imhoof, D., and Steege, D., 2004. ‘H German Summer Forum_Rosenstrasse’. Available from: http://www.h-net.org/~german/discuss/Rosenstrasse/Rosenstrasse_index.htm [Accessed 29 July 2005]. Contributions to the H-Net discussion can be divided broadly into two categories, namely those which sought to engage with the film, and those which used the film as a springboard for historical discussion.

feminist *Mütterfilm* that fosters empathy with the victims and the ‘good Germans’ (Parkinson); and a woman-centred German heritage film that tries to navigate the competing artistic and commercial requirements of contemporary German film (Winkle).⁴¹³

In this chapter I argue that *Rosenstraße* is a complex, contradictory heritage film, which has been developed against the backdrop of changing commercial demands of German cinema and of shifting patterns of remembering. It re-imagines an idealised German-Jewish relationship, and prioritises images of suffering and victimhood, but ones in which the non-Jewish experience of trauma is always secondary, and understood in relation to the Jewish. It nevertheless foregrounds Christian iconography and teachings in its depictions of resistance. Most significantly it invites viewers to consider questions of identity, introducing re-modelled conceptions of the self and other in order to prioritise the idea of hybridity as superior, whilst simultaneously drawing on various notions of national identity. I conclude this chapter with the suggestion that *Rosenstraße* reflects a desire for a positive sense of shared identity in post-unification Germany, and simultaneously reveals the conflicting dynamics of generational remembering.

i) ***Rosenstraße*: A Synopsis**

Rosenstraße interweaves the narratives of three female characters, Ruth, Lena and Hannah.⁴¹⁴ The film is set in New York and Berlin and spans three periods of time –

⁴¹³ Berghahn, D., 2006. ‘Post-1990 Screen Memories: How East and West German Cinema Remembers the Third Reich and the Holocaust’. *German Life & Letters*, 59(2), pp.294-308, here p.302; Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, pp.155-156; Parkinson, A. M., 2010. ‘Neo-feminist *Mütterfilm*? Emotional Politics of Margarethe von Trotta’s *Rosenstraße*’. In: J.Fischer and B. Prager, eds. *The Collapse of the Conventional: German Film and Its Politics at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp.109-135; Taberner, S., 2005b. ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film: Aimée und Jaguar, *Rosenstraße* and *Das Wunder von Bern*’. *German Life and Letters*, pp. 357-372, here, pp.364-367; Winkle, S., 2012. ‘Margarethe von Trotta’s *Rosenstraße*. ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’. In: T. Ginsberg and A. Mensch, eds. *A Companion to German Cinema*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp.429-461.

⁴¹⁴ In the interview, which accompanies the DVD, von Trotta claims that she based Ruth on a real person, whose mother was deported from *Rosenstraße* and who featured in Michael Muschner’s 1994 documentary *Befreiung aus der Rosenstraße*. Unfortunately it has not been possible to obtain a copy of this documentary. In addition, von Trotta states she based the character Lena is based on two women, including one of the protesters von Trotta interviewed but did not name. Secondly, von Trotta suggests she based Lena on Gräfin von Malzahn, who saved her Jewish lover from deportation, literally hiding him in a sofa when the Gestapo searched her home. It seems Lena’s character may have also based on Hanna Löwenstein de Witt, as the depiction closely parallels descriptions in her son Hans’ testimony in

2001, 1943 and 1932. *Rosenstraße* begins in New York in the present day following the funeral of Ruth's husband, Robert Weinstein, a lecturer at the Columbia State University.⁴¹⁵ Unbeknownst to Ruth's family, Robert's sudden death has triggered the remembrance of a deeply suppressed trauma in Ruth, one that she is now trying to forget. As a consequence she has adopted an uncharacteristically strict sense of orthodoxy, which perplexes her daughter Hannah, and her son Ben. Not only has she adopted strict mourning rituals in accordance with Orthodox Jewish tradition, but Ruth also tries to forbid Hannah from marrying her non-Jewish, Nicaraguan fiancé, Luis Marquez, even though she had previously accepted him.⁴¹⁶ Unable to fathom her mother's behaviour, Hannah resolves to find its cause by looking into her mother's past. The catalyst is provided by Rachel Rosenbauer, who, it turns out, is Ruth's cousin, with whom she grew up once she had arrived in America, but about whom Ruth's children previously knew nothing. Rachel explains to Hannah that her mother was rescued by a German woman in Berlin named Lena Fischer, with whom she lived until Rachel's parents brought her to the United States after the war.

Hannah heads to Berlin. She quickly establishes that Lena is alive (now aged 90) and still lives in Berlin. Hannah arranges to interview her, but conceals her true identity in the first instance, posing as an American historian researching mixed marriages during the Third Reich so that she may learn the full story. Through a series of flashbacks, the viewer learns that Lena was once a promising concert pianist in the early 1930s, who married fellow musician and German-Jewish violinist, Fabian Fischer. Upon their marriage, however, Lena's anti-Semitic father, Baron von Eschenbach cut all ties with his daughter, and refused her entry into the aristocratic family home, a fact her mother passively accepted. Once the Nazis came to power, Fabian and Lena, as a Jew and the spouse of a Jew, were stopped from pursuing their intended musical careers.

both Gernot Jochheim and Nina Schröder's popular histories discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. See the Interview with Margarethe von Trotta in the bonus material. *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

⁴¹⁵ Ruth Weinstein is also supposed to have been a lecturer. Neither her nor her husband's occupations are made entirely clear in the film, but von Trotta makes this known in her audio commentary on the DVD.

⁴¹⁶ Luis worked as Robert Weinstein's assistant and, the viewer learns, Robert welcomed the intended marriage between Luis and Hannah, as did she. The sudden rejection is all the more perplexing considering her son is also intermarried.

Lena narrates the events of the Factory Action, and protest, revealing what happened to Ruth. Her recollections begin on the first day of the Factory Action. Whilst searching for Fabian, Lena chances upon the growing demonstration in Rosenstraße. Learning from one of the women – Frau Goldberg – that the Jewish Community building has been turned into a collection centre, she ascertains that Fabian is amongst the detainees. She remains in Rosenstraße, and is later joined by the eight-year-old Ruth, whose parents, the viewer learns, are divorced; her German father, a member of the Wehrmacht, is on the Eastern Front, and her Jewish mother has been arrested. The viewer has already seen that Ruth, having evaded capture, had subsequently managed to sneak into the building undetected, and find her mother. They were briefly reunited, but in order to save Ruth from deportation her mother, Miriam Süßmann, tells her to join the women outside, to get one of them to take care of her until she can return. By nightfall Ruth is taken into Lena's care. Over the following days the protest increases, as does the despair of the protesters and detainees alike. In addition, both Lena and her brother Arthur, an injured Wehrmacht officer, undertake a series of ultimately futile endeavours to secure Fabian's release. Events in Rosenstraße escalate. Ruth's mother Miriam and twenty-five of the detainees are deported, causing outrage and despair on the street; this also leads another of the protesters, Klara, to take her own life. After seven days, the remaining detainees are returned to their families, or in Ruth's case, taken into her new family with Lena and Fabian.

Although Hannah had concealed her true identity, over the course of their interviews Lena gradually realises that Hannah is, in fact, Ruth's daughter. This realisation, it is implied, may ultimately offer Lena the chance of reconciliation with Ruth, and at the very least has brought her together with Hannah. Lena tells her, „ich bin froh, dass du gekommen bist.“⁴¹⁷ Having discovered the secrets surrounding her mother's past, and with a new understanding of Ruth's behaviour, Hannah returns to New York, where she and her mother are also reconciled. The film concludes with Hannah's marriage to Luis, to which Ruth has now given her blessing.

⁴¹⁷ Dialogue transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

ii) *Rosenstraße* in Context

Rosenstraße marked von Trotta's return to the big screen after the poor performance of *Das Versprechen*, her 1994 collaboration with author Peter Schneider.⁴¹⁸ Although *Rosenstraße* received a critical barracking, particularly in Germany, it also achieved critical acclaim, was nominated for and won a number of European film awards.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, it proved popular with cinema-going audiences in Germany, remaining in some screens for up to six months, a fact that attests to the film's popular appeal, although it may also be partly due to general public interest in films about the Nazi past.⁴²⁰ Certainly in the early 2000s, such films were commercially successful. Nevertheless, commentators focused on *Rosenstraße* only relatively briefly until recent analyses of it as a neo-feminist *Mütterfilm* by Anna M. Parkinson and as a female orientated German heritage film by Sally Winkle.⁴²¹

Nearly a decade on from the film's cinematic release, this chapter reconsiders von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*, arguing that it is a more complex exploration of the German-Jewish past, its remembrance and its on-going impact in the present and into the future, than earlier analyses have suggested. By comparing the film with the original drafts of the first and second screenplays we gain an insight into shifting attitudes, which as I show, gradually begin to reflect broader trends in remembering. This also shows how von Trotta adapted her screenplay to accommodate the changing demands of the German film industry. In line with Robert A. Rosenstone's observation that films open up a discourse on the past, in which they offer a commentary "on social, political,

⁴¹⁸ In the intervening years von Trotta had worked primarily in television.

⁴¹⁹ Hailey, J., 2005. 'Awards for Rosenstrasse (2003)'. Available from: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0298131> [Accessed 8th November 2009]. *Rosenstraße* was nominated for Camerimage's Golden Frog award, and for the Golden Lion award at the 60th Venice International Film Festival. Katja Riemann was nominated for Best Actress in at the European Film Awards. *Rosenstraße* also won the SIGNIS Award and UNICEF award at the Venice International Film Festival, with Katja Riemann collecting the Volpi Cup award for best actress. Franz Rath won the award for Best Cinematography at the Bavarian Film Awards in 2004, whilst *Rosenstraße* was joint winner of the David di Donatello Awards (Tied with *Dogville*) and also won at the 2004 Italian Golden Globes, taking home the award for Best Distributor and Best European Film.

⁴²⁰ Noack, F., 26 July 2004. 'FORUM: FILMREV Noack on Rosenstrasse: Margarethe von Trotta's Homage to Non-Political Antifascism'. *H-Net Multimedia Review. H.German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=764> [Accessed 25 July 2005].

⁴²¹ Parkinson, 'Neo-feminist Mütterfilm?', pp.109-135; Winkle, 'Feminist Re-Visions' of a Historical Controversy of a Historical Controversy', pp.429-461.

moral and personal issues of both past and present,”⁴²² I argue that *Rosenstraße* has played a significant role in shaping public understanding of the protest. In line with my theoretical framework, I suggest that *Rosenstraße* added to understanding of the protest, building on earlier representations, such as Jochheim’s popular history, but it also functioned as a catalyst for debate.

In Part One of this chapter, I place *Rosenstraße*, and the reactions to it, in the context of German films contemporary to its production, showing how it fitted in with but also deviated from broader cinematic trends. I explore the motivation behind the film, and explain the long process from von Trotta’s original plans in 1995 to the film’s eventual production. Two versions of the original screenplay were produced; the first version was completed in April and the revised one in December 1995. It appeared that production would go ahead at one point – a fact that is rarely, if ever mentioned. However, neither version was made. The reasons for this vary, and will be explored.

It was only after a substantial re-write in collaboration with American screenwriter Pamela Katz that *Rosenstraße* gained the go-ahead, beginning production seven years after von Trotta’s original screenplays had been rejected.⁴²³ This raises a number of questions. I ask whether the adoption of a narrative style more in line with the Hollywood format than with the New German Cinema as was originally intended, coupled with changing trends in German filmmaking finally enabled von Trotta to realise her project. I observe, however, that the realisation of the film project came at the price of abandoning certain aspects of her original plans, indicating that the two are interrelated. I suggest therefore that the changes adopted for the final screenplay reflect the shifting desires and values in German society as much as they accommodate the changes in the German film industry.

So far no other study has considered the original scripts in detail. Sally Winkle provided a brief synopsis of each of the original drafts, focusing mainly on the second

⁴²² Rosenstone, R.A., 2000. ‘A History of what has not yet happened’, *Rethinking History* 4:2, pp.183-192, here p.184 and p.186.

⁴²³ Pamela Katz was involved in the framing narrative, writing the scenes set in New York with von Trotta. The remainder of the film is a re-working of the original drafts.

version.⁴²⁴ The screenplays from April and December 1995 provide an insight into the memory struggles behind the film, along with issues of generational remembering. Stuart Taberner has asked whether the second post-war⁴²⁵ generation have begun, since reunification, to consider whether they had been too harsh in their judgement towards the perpetrator generation, and to regret their unwillingness to express empathy with them.⁴²⁶ Similarly, Karen Remmler remarks that “German unification brought about a desire among second generation Germans to mourn their own – even as they busily mourned Jews and other victims murdered, maimed, and made to disappear by the Nazis and their accomplices.” In the light of this, as I consider the original scripts, as well as the final film, I ask whether the ideas contained within them indicate a belated empathy amongst the generation born during or shortly after the war (to which von Trotta, born in 1942, belongs) with members of the first generation, which conflicts with their earlier compulsion to confront and challenge.

In Part Two of this chapter I turn to the film, examining the key themes that emerge over the course of the action. I argue that through its thematisation of repressed memory and trauma, von Trotta’s *Rosenstraße* articulates a desire to re-consider the German-Jewish relationship more empathetically, and that this fits in with wider trends in German film in the early 2000s, which engaged in trans-generational dialogue in particular. Thematising repressed memory in *Rosenstraße* also facilitated a critical reflection upon the treatment of Holocaust survivors in the post-war era, perhaps surprisingly directing criticism outwards towards the United States of America rather than inwards at the FRG. In so doing, von Trotta is able to suggest, that Germans will ultimately be the ones to help them overcome their past trauma, in a process that is cathartic for Jewish and non-Jewish Germans.

In comparison with other German films contemporary to its production, most notably Max Färberböck’s *Aimee & Jaguar* (1999), *Rosenstraße* suggests there is a causal link

⁴²⁴ Winkle was supplied with the second version by Nathan Stoltzfus. It appears she did not have a copy of the first draft, and drew details for her synopsis from the information provided by Thilo Wydra in his book accompanying the film. However, it is the first draft, which I analyse here, that arguably offers the most insight. See Winkle, ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy,’ pp.433-434.

⁴²⁵ Remmler, ‘Encounters Across the Void’, p.23.

⁴²⁶ Taberner, S., 2005a. *German Literature of the 1990s and Beyond. Normalization and the Berlin Republic*. Rochester: Camden House, p.134. Taberner relates this to the re-emergence of the theme of German suffering, however, von Trotta’s draft screenplays precede this.

between the victimhood and suffering of Jewish and non-Jewish Germans, suggesting that both may be understood as victims of National Socialism. Yet, whilst von Trotta is keen to stress that non-Jewish Germans suffered, she is careful to emphasise that their suffering is only ever secondary, thereby ensuring that the greater significance of the Holocaust remains central, and non-Jewish suffering must be understood in relation to it, not vice versa. By representing both Jewish and non-Jewish Germans as victims, however, von Trotta is able to suggest that their trauma can be worked through together, through understanding, recognition of a mutual enemy and a shared experience, as a result of which their former bond is re-established.

Nevertheless, von Trotta also extends the notion of victimhood beyond those immediately affected by the Factory Action and includes almost all Germans, albeit to varying extents. Alongside this *Rosenstraße* also alludes to the existence of ‘another Germany’, depicting various forms of opposition and dissent of which the protest is the most significant, but which also includes Miriam’s sacrifices to save Ruth (both in sending her away, and later lying as to her whereabouts), and Lena’s unofficial adoption of Ruth. Whilst we may see in this a nod towards the greater inclusivity in resistance trends that we saw in previous chapters, particularly in regard to the *Stille Helden* (Chapter 2) and the image of the Jewish fighter (Chapter 3), it also offers a means for von Trotta to re-envision resistance – both Jewish and non-Jewish – through Christian imagery. *Rosenstraße* links resistance with the Creation, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and notions of self-sacrifice, albeit in the guise of enlightened, anti-racist, humanist values to which the viewer is invited to aspire. This enables von Trotta to present National Socialism as a deviation from the norm, as a phenomenon imposed on an unwilling nation, but one that will leave it tainted long after its demise.

Conversely, however, in an example of the inherent contradictions within the narrative, von Trotta simultaneously undermines the resistance and dissent she depicts by incorporating notions of sexual sacrifice, thereby de-valuing the film’s central messages about civic courage and solidarity. The question of whether or not Lena sacrificed herself to Goebbels in order to negotiate the detainees’ release has been a matter of heated debate in the press, online and almost certainly amongst the viewing public. Frank Noack discussed and rejected the plausibility of any such sacrifice based on an assessment of Lena’s clothing, on the “well-documented fact that Goebbels wasn’t

attracted to blondes, and that he rigidly separated sex from politics.”⁴²⁷ Dismissed by von Trotta as a pure *Männerfantasie*,⁴²⁸ the scene is clearly ambiguous enough to leave the viewer to speculate on what might have happened irrespective of the director’s original intention. Sally Winkle’s findings are similar to Noack’s, but she concedes that it “detracts from the focus on female solidarity and civic courage.”⁴²⁹ I argue, however, that the suggestion of sexual sacrifice is implicit in the film. Moreover, from the very first screenplay, there has always been a tacit hint of sexual politics, which trivialises the protest. The image von Trotta creates of the protesters as pure, admirable women is juxtaposed with this implication of sexual sacrifice. The viewer’s attention is directed to the individual’s actions rather than to the collective efforts of the protesters, and the film’s messages of the importance of civic courage and the influence of collective opposition are undermined.

Lastly, this chapter examines the thematisation of anti-Semitism, prejudice towards intermarriage, philo-Semitism and ideals of identity. In *Rosenstraße* von Trotta attempts to show that while the virulent anti-Semitism of the Third Reich belongs to Germany’s past, opposition to inter-faith marriage has not entirely disappeared – at least not in America. Yet, the film also suggests that this can be overcome, and moreover, that this can happen precisely because of the legacy of the Holocaust, and a mutual forgiving between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans (between Lena and Ruth). As the elderly Lena enlightens Hannah about her mother’s past, she paves the way for Hannah and Ruth’s reconciliation and Ruth’s acceptance of Hannah’s marriage to Luis. To put it bluntly, it is the German who shows the American German-Jewish émigré the path to enlightenment. The viewer is thus also invited to reflect on questions of identity. Von Trotta’s film implies that any purist sense of identity is inherently flawed, as highlighted by models of German identity in the first half of the twentieth century, and by implication it ought to be replaced by a hybrid conception of identity. In

⁴²⁷ Noack, F., 26 July 2004. ‘FORUM: FILMREV Noack on *Rosenstrasse*: Margarethe von Trotta’s Homage to Non-Political Antifascism’. *H-Net Multimedia Review*. *H.German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=764> [Accessed 25 July 2005].

⁴²⁸ Von Trotta made this comment in several radio interviews and again in her audio commentary for the DVD. She tried to discredit Benz’s arguments by suggesting it resulted entirely from his own sexual fantasies. However, it appears she overlooked the fact that the suggestion was first made in an article in *Der Spiegel* by Wolfgang Höbel. See his 2003. ‘Opfergang in Abendrobe. Margarethe von Trotta’s neues Werk „Rosenstraße“ ist der einzige deutsche Beitrag im Wettbewerb der am Mittwoch beginnenden Filmfestspiele in Venedig’. *Der Spiegel* 35, p.146.

⁴²⁹ Winkle, ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, pp.450-451.

Rosenstraße, this hybrid identity is one that transcends national, religious and ethnic boundaries, whilst incorporating characteristics such as *deutsche Treue*, deemed to be in the German and Christian traditions. It is possible to see parallels here to notions of cultural hybridity in the post-colonial theories developed by Homi K. Bhabha, specifically through the implication that hybridity challenges the legitimacy of essentialist, or fixed notions of identity.⁴³⁰

In *Rosenstraße* embracing hybridity signifies the ultimate rejection of National Socialism and its ideology. Although von Trotta rejected national identity as tainted, in a further example of the inherent contradictions in the narrative she simultaneously reclaimed it in a new form, to which intermarriage provides the key to overcoming the past. The future of the German-Jewish relationship is embodied through the utopian potential of the child.⁴³¹ We see a metaphorical doubling of the young Ruth, a child of intermarried parents and a symbol of hope for the future, with Ruth's granddaughter, Emily, who we see in the opening and closing scenes of the film, but who never speaks. She, like her grandmother, is the daughter of intermarried parents (Ruth's son Ben and his wife Marian), and provides a symbol of hope that the values and ideals demonstrated by the adults – von Trotta's hybrid ideal – will be carried on into the future. The privileging of hybridity (which was popular in the 1990s and early 2000s), I suggest, expresses a desire to develop a more positive sense of self based a moral rejection of past, fixed models of identity. Yet, the privileging of hybrid identity over the national may also have an unfortunate implication, in so far as it promotes an elision of difference, suggesting that hybridity is superior to the national in the way that once the idea of the German *Volksgemeinschaft*, of the Aryan race was considered superior.

iii) Responses to *Rosenstraße*

Responses to *Rosenstraße* have tended to fall into one of two categories; they have either utilised the film to launch their own historical interpretation (as we saw in

⁴³⁰ Bhabha, H.K., 1994. *The Location of Culture*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge; Ellis, J., 1995. 'The Location of Culture (review)'. *Philosophy and Literature* 19:1, pp.196-197.

⁴³¹ In his discussion of von Trotta's *Die Bleierne Zeit*, Chris Homewood discussed figure of the child through whom hopes for the future are expressed. Similarities in *Rosenstraße* are examined below. See, Homewood, *From Baader to Prada*, pp.142-148.

Chapter 2) or they have focused on the actual film and its relative merits and shortcomings. An examination of newspaper articles from the period immediately prior to the film's release (it premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and was a key feature of the 60th Venice International Film Festival) through to the first weeks afterwards, points towards a pattern in responses to the film.⁴³² Whilst *Rosenstraße* was a contender at the Venice Film Festival – the only German one in fact – reviews tended to be more positive, praising the film for addressing the subject and for engendering interest in it, whilst also emphasising von Trotta's years of struggle in getting the film made in the first place.⁴³³ A notable exception to this is Wolfgang Höbel's article in *Der Spiegel*, in which he, rather than Benz, was the first to question the Goebbels' scene and the insinuation of sexual sacrifice.⁴³⁴ The critical barracking, however, began the day before the film's release, with Iris Noah's article accusing von Trotta and her team of anti-Semitism, followed a day later by Benz's now well known review.⁴³⁵

To an extent the responses to von Trotta's film were predictable, formulaic even. If the praise at the Venice Film Festival, followed by widespread criticism, accusations of making unfounded claims to authenticity and historical truth, falsifying history and trivialising the actual events sound familiar, that is because they are. The same pattern can be found in the press's engagement with von Trotta's film *Die bleierne Zeit*. In 1981, von Trotta had been lauded whilst at the Venice Film Festival, where she won the prestigious Golden Lion award (for which *Rosenstraße* was also later nominated), only for the film's subsequent nationwide release to prompt condemnation. The key criticism in 1981 was von Trotta's dubious claim to historical truth, the accusation that

⁴³² The Toronto Film Festival began on 10th August and the Venice Film Festival on 31st of that month. It was it's showing in Venice that attracted the attention in the German press.

⁴³³ See for example: Behrens, V., 2003. 'Der vergessene Aufstand der Frauen. Rosenstrasse. Ein unbekanntes Kapitel des Widerstandes gegen die Nazis läuft beim Filmfestival in Venedig'. *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 30 August, p.16; Buck, C.M., 2003a. '„Das fand alles gleich nebenan statt. Interview mit Margarethe von Trotta, deren Film „Rosenstrasse“ bei den morgen beginnenden Internationalen Filmfestspielen in Venedig im Wettbewerb läuft“'. *Neues Deutschland*, 26 August, p.15; Göttler, F., 2003a. 'Margarethe von Trotta. Deutsche Regisseurin auf die Biennale in Venedig'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 August, p.4; Göttler, F., 2003b. 'Liebe in den Zeiten des Untergangs. Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* ist der deutsche Beitrag beim Filmfestival von Venedig'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27 August, p.11; Grabowsky, F., 2003. 'Die vergessene Straße der Heldinnen. Margarethe von Trotta's neuer Kinofilm holt die spektakuläre Geschichte der Rosenstraße ins öffentliche Bewusstsein zurück'. *Berliner Morgenpost*, 7 September, p.14.

⁴³⁴ Höbel, 'Opfergang in Abendrobe', p.146.

⁴³⁵ Benz, 'Kitsch, Klamotte und Klitterei?' p.13; Noah, I., 2003. 'Willkommen seid ihr, Klischees. In Margarethe von Trotta's Film „Rosenstraße“ soll man die Juden schon an der Nasenspitze erkennen und Deutsche haben unbedingt blond zu sein'. *Jungle World* 39, 17 September, p. 12.

she had falsified history and trivialised the actual events.⁴³⁶ The parallel in the responses to von Trotta's different films, dealing with different subject matters over two decades apart from each other, is uncanny.

Reviewers, however, also levelled further criticisms at *Rosenstraße*, including criticisms of stereotyping, use of clichés, use of melodrama, and in particular the modern day framing narrative, which the *Berliner Morgenpost*'s Matthias Heine describes as „überflüssig und melodramatisch bis zur Peinlichkeit”.⁴³⁷ Other reviewers picked up on the nostalgic, rose-tinted versions of the past, and of the image of contemporary Germany, which von Trotta presented, commented on the Goebbels scene, on the ensuing feud between Benz and von Trotta, and on the inaccuracies and disparities between the film and the historical events.⁴³⁸ Drawing attention to the fact that whilst *Rosenstraße* received critical success abroad it failed to achieve the same sort of recognition at home, film critic Frank Noack implied that von Trotta had been denied the chance of a fair reception. He argued: “Even the defenders were defensive, asking readers to ignore the film's flaws because of its honourable content. Director Margarethe von Trotta wasn't slaughtered, but, even worse, she was treated patronizingly as someone who means well and isn't much of an artist. When the nominations for the German Film Awards were announced in mid-April 2003, *Rosenstraße* was completely overlooked, just days after winning Italy's David di Donatello Award as Best Foreign Picture.”⁴³⁹ Yet, he also pointed out the disparity between the film's critical reception and the level of public interest. Reviewers may not have liked *Rosenstraße*, but German cinema-going audiences certainly seemed to, suggesting that it must possess qualities with a wide appeal.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁶ Homewood, *From Baader to Prada*, pp.123-125.

⁴³⁷ Heine, 'Aufstand der Frauen', p14.

⁴³⁸ Hermes, M., 2003. 'Aktivistisches Eigenleben. Margarethe von Trotta erinnert mit ihrem Film „Rosenstraße” vor allem dank der überragenden Schauspielerinnen an eine vergessene Widerstandsaktion deutscher Ehefrauen gegen den NS-Staat'. *taz* 18 September, p.16. Benz and von Trotta traded accusations in the press and in radio interviews.

⁴³⁹ Noack, F., 26 July 2004. 'FORUM: FILMREV Noack on *Rosenstrasse*: Margarethe von Trotta's Homage to Non-Political Antifascism'. *H-Net Multimedia Review. H.German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=764> [Accessed 25 July 2005].

⁴⁴⁰ Noack suggests that in the first 6 months *Rosenstraße* was seen by over 600,000 people in Germany.

iv) Trends in Cinema: *Rosenstraße* as a German Heritage Film

German national cinema, historically, has never shied away from engaging with the Nazi past. In fact, Eric Rentschler claims no other (national) cinema, has lent itself so consistently and productively to investigations between film and nationhood.⁴⁴¹ Whilst filmic engagement with the Third Reich has been continuous, I note that how films have negotiated Germany's fascist past has shifted significantly over the ensuing decades, and also differed between East, West and post-unification Germany, as a number of studies have already highlighted.⁴⁴² It is beyond the remit of this chapter to discuss in detail the shifts and patterns in German national cinema in the last 70 years: I shall, however, be focusing on the cinematic trends that are directly relevant to *Rosenstraße*.

Post-unification German cinema has been particularly affected by the establishment of a younger generation of filmmakers and changes to film funding. This has also brought with it a move towards Hollywood and away from traditional European cinema. According to David Clarke, these "commercially viable German language films" are notable for their "privileging of technical competence over critical subject matter," a change in strategy that has not necessarily been welcomed by German film critics.⁴⁴³ For directors such as Margarethe von Trotta, associated with the New German Cinema (the non-commercial, state-subsidized cinema of the Federal Republic, largely associated with left-wing filmmakers, and political film), adapting to these changes became a necessity. Sally Winkle put this succinctly when she argued that in making *Rosenstraße* "von Trotta needed to reconcile contradictory imperatives as she attempted to both entertain her audience and authentically depict a controversial episode in the Nazi past."⁴⁴⁴

Two phases of cinematic production are relevant to discussion of von Trotta's film: the *Komödienzeit* and the return of films about the Third Reich. Von Trotta has been keen

⁴⁴¹ Rentschler, E., 2000. 'From New German Cinema to the Post-Wall Cinema of Consensus'. In: M. Hjort and S. Mackenzie, eds. *Cinema and Nation*. London: Routledge, pp.260-277, here p.260.

⁴⁴² Recent works on German film include: Clarke, D., ed., 2006. *German Cinema Since Unification*. London & New York: Continuum; Cooke, P., and Silberman, M., eds. 2010. *Screening War: Perspectives on German Suffering*. Woodbridge & New York: Camden House.

⁴⁴³ Clarke, *German Cinema Since Unification*. pp.1-2.

⁴⁴⁴ Winkle, 'Feminist Re-Visions' of a Historical Controversy', p.438.

to suggest that the predominance of the *Beziehungskömodien* up until the late 1990s was a key factor in her initial failure to secure the financial backing for *Rosenstraße*, a claim that I explore in greater detail in this chapter, and which I suggest has been overstated.⁴⁴⁵ However, trends in German cinema began to shift back to the Third Reich as films including Dani Levy's *Meschugge* (1998), Max Färberböck's *Aimée & Jaguar* (1999), Caroline Link's Oscar-winning *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (Nowhere in Africa, 2001), and Oliver Hirschbiegel's *Der Untergang* (Downfall, 2004) demonstrated the commercial viability of the genre. *Rosenstraße* was no exception here. Irrespective of the controversy following the film's German release, there is no doubt as to its commercial viability either in the domestic or international market; released in twenty-three countries, although notably not in the UK, it has more recently has been re-released on Blu-Ray.⁴⁴⁶ German films of the late 1990s and early 2000s tended towards individual stories, German-Jewish ones in particular, which focused on the 'ordinary German' and on the perspective from below. They involved the use of a melodramatic narrative, generational remembering and shifting time frames, whilst highlighting the temporal distance from the events depicted. This follows a similar pattern to Hollywood blockbusters including, for example, James Cameron's *Titanic* (1997).⁴⁴⁷

This shift also marks the introduction of heritage film into German national cinema. Heritage film is a familiar mode of filmmaking associated with European cinema, albeit one with differing national characteristics. In Germany it is "inextricably linked to the specificities of German national history in the twentieth century," with a particular emphasis on German-Jewish history, largely focused on the period of the Third Reich and its aftermath.⁴⁴⁸ Lutz Koepnick suggests heritage films "tend to privilege setting over narrative, mise-en-scène over editing [...] and are typified by their "production of usable and consumable pasts" in which history is seen as a "site of comfort and

⁴⁴⁵ Buck, C.M., 2003a. "Das fand alles gleich nebenan statt. Interview mit Margarethe von Trotta, deren Film "Rosenstrasse" bei den morgen beginnenden Internationalen Filmfestspielen in Venedig im Wettbewerb läuft". *Neues Deutschland*, 26 August, p.15; Junghänel, F., and Walter, B., 2003. 'Von Trotta, ist das alter Adel? Die Filmemacherin Margarethe von Trotta über Familienwurzeln, mutige Frauen im Nationalsozialismus und ein Leben ohne Heimatgefühl'. *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 September, p.19.

⁴⁴⁶ The fact that *Rosenstraße* has been re-released on Blu-Ray also points to its continuing commercial viability. The Blu-Ray version has been available since November 2012.

⁴⁴⁷ For a comparison of German films with Cameron's *Titanic*, see: Cooke, P., 2008. 'German Wartime Suffering as Hollywood Disaster Movie'. *German Life and Letters* 61:2, April, pp.279-294.

⁴⁴⁸ Koepnick, L., 2002. 'Reframing the Past: Heritage Cinema and the Holocaust in the 1990s'. *New German Critique*, 87, pp.47-82, here p.51.

orientation”.⁴⁴⁹ This, along with the observations on the commercial viability of heritage films, may seem to suggest they offer little by way of either artistic or political value. However, Koepnick maintains that heritage filmmaking “has been used in order to revise dominant views of history and recuperate past worlds in which certain people were mocked, despised and persecuted,” and “actively reinterpret the past according to the changing views of history, memory, gender and ethnicity.”⁴⁵⁰ Sally Winkle argues that *Rosenstraße*, with its “carefully constructed, historically accurate mise-en-scène and costumes, well-known German actors, high production values, fairly traditional classical narrative, and closure,” can be included in the heritage genre. I concur with this, adding the caveat that it is a heritage film that, somewhat against the grain of cinematic trends, attempted to reinforce the difference in suffering between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans.⁴⁵¹

v) Von Trotta’s Motivation and Competing Interests

In interviews von Trotta stated that during the ‘*Komödienzeit*’ no one wanted to finance her film project.⁴⁵² In the film journal *Kinofenster*, she explained:

Das erste Drehbuch habe ich 1994/95 geschrieben und bis 1996 haben Volker Schlöndorff und das Studio Babelsberg versucht, das Geld zusammenzubekommen, aber es war nichts zu machen, vielleicht wegen der Kömödienzeit im Kino.⁴⁵³

The media were quick to remark on the long wait for *Rosenstraße*. According to news agency Deutsche Presse-Agentur, „Trotta hat mehr als zehn Jahre für die Realisierung des Films gekämpft.”⁴⁵⁴ Certainly, the idea of a determined struggle on the director’s

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., pp.49-51.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., p.56.

⁴⁵¹ Winkle, ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, p.437.

⁴⁵² She tended to express this with varying degrees of conviction. For example, in her interview for *Neues Deutschland* she stated that no one wanted to finance the film, whereas in her interview with *Kinofenster* her answer is somewhat ambiguous. Buck, ‘Das fand alles gleich nebenan statt’, p.15;

⁴⁵³ Margarethe von Trotta cited in Köhler, M., 2003. ‘„Ein Widerstand, der sich aus dem Leben ergab“ Ein Gespräch mit Margarethe von Trotta zu ihrem Film *Rosenstraße*’. *Kinofenster*, 16 September. Available from: <http://www.kinofenster.de/ausgaben/kf0309/inter1.htm>. [Accessed 16 August 2006].

⁴⁵⁴ Whilst the Deutsche Presse Agentur emphasised von Trotta’s battle, papers such as *Neues Deutschland* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* toned their language down, suggesting that she tried, rather than fought, for the project for 10 years. See: Buck, C.M., 2003b. ‘Seltene Beispiel spontanen Widerstands. Filmstart: Katja Riemann und Maria Schrader in Margarethe von Trottas „Rosenstraße“’. *Neues Deutschland*, 18 September, p.11; Göttler, F., 2003d. ‘Mädels im Märchenwald. *Rosenstraße* will aus dem historischen Ereignis den beispielhaften Mut destillieren und verlangt vom Zuschauer starkes

part was a good marketing strategy for the film's promotion, suggesting to the would-be viewer that von Trotta had fought a long, honourable battle to bring this story to them, dovetailing neatly with the notions of struggle and determination against the odds, which are important messages in the actual film. There is no reason to suggest that the *Komödienzeit* was irrelevant when it came to von Trotta's failure to secure financial backing, yet, there are reasons to doubt the extent to which it had an impact. Only a year previously Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1994) had underlined the interest in and also the willingness to engage in debates about the Holocaust, and the role of ordinary Germans.

In addition to the competing commercial interests within the German film industry, we note that an idea for a film about the events in Rosenstraße was first put to von Trotta in 1990, not as has been claimed in subsequent interviews by Volker Schlöndorff, but by American historian Nathan Stoltzfus. In an interview in 2005, von Trotta claimed that Schlöndorff, at that time head of Studio Babelsberg, had heard about the events and thought it would be a suitable project for her, given her reputation as a feminist filmmaker.⁴⁵⁵ Although Schlöndorff may well have suggested the idea to her as well, a series of letters shows that Stoltzfus had first proposed she should direct a film based on his research, and in time duly sent a draft manuscript.⁴⁵⁶ When von Trotta replied two years later, she suggested there must be some misunderstanding as she had no intention of creating a film about the protest, even though she thought it was an important story to tell, citing existing film commitments and that she preferred to write and direct her own, original screenplays, as reasons for declining any collaboration.⁴⁵⁷

Engagement. Schön. Nur: ein solcher Ansatz passt eher in die Siebziger als ins neue Jahrtausend'. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 18 September, p.16.

⁴⁵⁵ Phillips, R., 2005. "To show the courage of those who resisted the Nazis", An Interview with Margarethe von Trotta, director of *Rosenstrasse*. Available from: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2005/05/rosen-m31.html> [Accessed 13 April 2013].

⁴⁵⁶ Letter to Nathan Stoltzfus from Ingrid Slejfir on behalf of Margarethe von Trotta, 18 December 1990. Letter courtesy of Nathan Stoltzfus. He also collaborated with Pierre Sauvage of the Chambon Foundation. There were plans to create a documentary. However, according to Sauvage, it seemed unlikely to go ahead. See: Sauvage, P., http://www.chambon.org/rosenstrasse_en.htm. [Accessed 27 July 2005]. Sauvage, P., (sauvage@chambon.org) 31 July 2005. *Documentary on Rosenstrasse*. Email to H.J.Potter (H.J.Potter@bath.ac.uk).

⁴⁵⁷ Letter to Nathan Stoltzfus from Margarethe von Trotta, 9 April 1992. Traditionally, von Trotta has favoured *Autorenkino* whereby the director is involved in and has overall responsibility for every stage of the process from script writing through to the editing stages. Sieglöhr, U., 1998. 'New German Cinema'. In: J. Hill and P. Church eds. *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp.466-470, here p.468.

Whatever the reason for her initial reluctance, von Trotta changed her mind, and drafted the original version of her screenplay in 1995.⁴⁵⁸ This first version, which interwove a number of different narratives, was deemed too long, and therefore likely to be too expensive a production to secure financial backing.⁴⁵⁹ Upon Volker Schlöndorff's suggestion she shortened the screenplay. Although, as indicated above, the film failed to gain sufficient financial backing, it seems plans were nevertheless relatively well established by mid-1996. A shooting date had been scheduled, provisionally, for March the following year, and veteran producer Hans-Jürgen Pohland was already involved in the project.⁴⁶⁰ As the intended producers, Studio Babelsberg were considering a number of options, including a European or US-co-production, seeking to collaborate with either Polygram in London or HBO in America.⁴⁶¹ Quite why the film failed to go ahead must therefore remain a matter of speculation. What is clear is that plans were far more advanced than has been hitherto suggested, and the earlier failure cannot solely be attributed to the *Kömodienzeit*, as has been suggested, but was most likely related to the content of the narrative.

One aspect that has yet to be considered, however, is the actual content of the first and second draft screenplays. In considering them I draw on Paul Cooke and Marc Silberman's observation that we should ask now only how films have been framed but also what is hidden in or by them.⁴⁶² By examining von Trotta's original screenplays we gain a new insight into the ideas and values contained in them, how they intersected with trends in remembering in the mid-1990s. This may further illuminate the reasons it took so long for the project to be realised. We see, for example, that von Trotta's

⁴⁵⁸ Von Trotta interviewed around 10 witnesses in the 1990s, including two women who had participated in the protest, and who, according to von Trotta, moved her the most, along with a number of people who, as children, had either accompanied their mothers on the protest or had themselves been amongst the detainees. Interview with Margarethe von Trotta, *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

⁴⁵⁹ This draft is 139 pages long. The second version was reduced to 94 pages.

⁴⁶⁰ Hans-Jürgen Pohland (1934-) has produced films including *Katz und Maus* (based on Günter Grass' novel of the same name) and most recently on *Die Rebellen von Oberhausen* (2012). Fax from Volker Schlöndorff to Rosalie Siegel (Literary Agent to Nathan Stoltzfus) 27th June 1996. Fax courtesy of Nathan Stoltzfus.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid. In this letter, perhaps in an attempt to avert any future issues over copyright, and to distance the actual film project from Stoltzfus' original proposal, Schlöndorff clearly stated that von Trotta had conducted her own research before commencing with her screenplay, and that the inspiration for the screenplay had been driven by her research with surviving eyewitnesses. He also highlighted that Stoltzfus was under no obligations to Studio Babelsberg and, should he receive other offers for a film based on his work, he was at liberty to pursue them.

⁴⁶² Cooke and Silberman, *Screening War*, p.2.

original screenplay offered uncomfortable readings of the Nazi past and of individual complicity. They also equated Jewish and non-Jewish suffering in a similar way to later films. Notably, in a shift from her original intentions, von Trotta herself eventually differentiated between types of suffering. In addition, in these initial screenplays acts of German resistance, especially by members of the aristocracy, were heroised, against the grain of broader historiographical trends, as already noted in Chapter 2, for example. Yet, she also intended to anchor the narrative more overtly, and visually, in imagery of the Holocaust. The aspects from these original plans, which were eventually abandoned, reflect firstly shifting patterns of memory, values and ideals, and secondly the way von Trotta sought to accommodate the changes in the German film industry, in order that she could gain backing for her film.

vi) Moving Towards a Critical Remembering? Criticisms, Contradictions and Problematic Interpretations in the Original April 1995 Screenplay

This version followed the events chronologically, from the morning of the first day of the Factory Action, the protest, through to the eventual release of the detainees, concluding with the 'return' of the men deported from Rosenstraße to Auschwitz. It explored the lives of multiple characters, mostly strangers until their paths intersected in Rosenstraße. The principle characters were Lena and Fabian Fischer, Hans and Klara Adler, the Goldbergs, Ruth and her mother Rahel Süßmann, the Schlesingers, and Arthur von Eschenbach; all of these characters appear in the actual film, albeit with most of their roles reduced.⁴⁶³

The screenplay follows the main characters and their attempts to rescue their loved ones. Frau Goldberg remains a constant presence in the street and is at the forefront of the protest. In addition to protesting, Klara turns to the Catholic Church, requesting their intervention on Hans' behalf, but is rejected on the grounds that as a Protestant married to a Catholic of Jewish descent, she was deemed unworthy of their assistance. Klara then turns to her estranged sister, Rosemarie, the wife of an SS officer, who again declines to help her. When Hans is amongst the twenty-five deportees from Rosenstraße, Klara desperately tries to rescue him, going to the Gestapo headquarters, accompanied by Lena, to plead for his return, but is again dismissed. Eventually she

⁴⁶³ We note that in the final film, von Trotta changed Hans and Klara's surname to Singer, likewise Rahel Süßmann later became Miriam Süßmann; for what reason is unclear.

commits suicide, only for her body to be found by the Gestapo and SS officers who had come to notify her of Hans' impending return.

Simultaneously, Lena undertakes a number of different attempts to rescue Fabian, some with the help of Arthur. As in the film, she asks her estranged father, Baron von Eschenbach, to intervene. His refusal prompts Arthur to act. He tries to use his position as an injured Wehrmacht officer and member of the aristocracy first to gain access to his old friend, the high-ranking officer Wilhelm von Weiz, and then to key regime figures, including Himmler and Goebbels, in order to dissuade them from deporting Fabian and the other detainees. Having failed to gain access to Himmler, Arthur arranges for him and Lena to attend a film premiere hosted by their friend and actress Litzy, at which Goebbels would be present. The intention is to allow Goebbels to be charmed by Lena and her musical talents, and then for Arthur to make a plea on behalf of the protesters. This plan succeeds and Goebbels orders the release of the detainees, albeit temporarily, in order to bring the protest to an end. Along with her participation in the protest, Lena has also taken Ruth under her wing. She introduces her to Fabian upon his release, telling him she is now to be their daughter.

At the same time, we see the growing solidarity amongst the detainees in Rosenstraße. This is juxtaposed with the on-going deportation of other Berlin Jews, including Fabian's parents, and Ruth's mother. The screenplay draws to a close with the arrival of the 'Auschwitz returnees' including Hans, at Putlitzstraße station. The closing scene depicts the returnees looking on in horror – their arrival coinciding with another wave of deportations.

This screenplay is disjointed, switching backwards and forwards between the different characters' lives and their individual fates, which become gradually intertwined. Through a series of flashback sequences the characters' different back-stories are illuminated. It is only as the film progresses, however, that the narrative eventually gains coherence. These features alone indicate that von Trotta intended *Rosenstraße* to be a film in the tradition of the New German Cinema, which as Sieglöhr has observed, was notable for its use of ambling narratives and overall sense of ambiguity.⁴⁶⁴ New

⁴⁶⁴ Sieglöhr, 'New German Cinema', p.468.

German Cinema also tended to be both critical of society and politics, and according to Eric Rentschler also inclined towards under-narrated stories with unappealing characters and unsatisfying conclusions – at least in the viewers’ opinion.⁴⁶⁵ However, it had been on the decline since the 1980s. Some responsibility for that can be attributed to the conservative Kohl government and its control over the distribution of federal film subsidies.⁴⁶⁶ Given the proposed film’s style and structure it is unsurprising that it failed to obtain funding in the mid-1990s. It also suggests that the claims that the *Kömödienzeit* was the cause of that failure have been overstated.

In this original draft, von Trotta intended to use a network of doublings, parallels and mirrorings in an attempt to convey the events as extensively as possible and from as many perspectives as possible. This is very much a hallmark of von Trotta’s film, as Marc Silberman, and more recently also Anna M. Parkinson have observed.⁴⁶⁷ Lena and Fabian, for example, double with Klara and Hans. Both husbands are arrested in the opening scenes, although in different circumstances, and taken to different rooms in Rosenstraße, suggesting from the outset that their eventual fates will differ. Whilst Fabian remains captive, Hans is amongst those deported, and later returned.

Lena and Klara similarly double with each other, but again this doubling will eventually split and the two women’s fates will differ. Von Trotta sketches out the similarities – how both women faced at least partial rejection from their own families. Whilst Klara’s attempt at reconciliation with her sister ultimately fails, Lena is eventually reconciled with her mother, even though her father remains distant. Equally, whilst Lena survives and takes on a new role as Ruth’s adoptive mother, Klara commits suicide, leaving behind a note in which she rejects her German identity, declares herself a Jewess and requests a Jewish burial, in a final act of solidarity with her husband Hans.⁴⁶⁸ The underlying message in this metaphorical doubling may be that true Germanness lies in the idea of the symbiosis. Whilst the protesters are thus true Germans, others who had previously embraced Nazism and rejected the symbiosis are also offered a way back. By seeking forgiveness, these Germans may ultimately return

⁴⁶⁵ Rentschler, ‘From New German Cinema to the Post-Wall Cinema of Consensus’, p.264.

⁴⁶⁶ Winkle, ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, p.434. Rentschler, ‘From New German Cinema to the Post-Wall Cinema of Consensus’, pp. 265-269.

⁴⁶⁷ Silberman, M., 1995. *German Cinema: Texts in Context*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, p.201 and Parkinson, ‘Neo-feminist Mütterfilm?’ pp.111-116.

⁴⁶⁸ Von Trotta, M., 1995a, *Rosenstraße* Draft Screenplay 1, pp.135-136.

to the fold, as Lena's mother Elise von Eschenbach does, but neither her father, nor Klara's sister do. By implication they, and their values, have no place in this idealised version of German society. On the other hand, Klara's suicide may also serve as a metaphor for German tragedy, and one that may more worryingly suggest that by embracing Judaism completely (ergo rejecting both Germanness and the idea of the symbiosis), Germans ultimately condemn themselves.

Additionally, von Trotta doubled groups as well as individuals, paralleling intermarried and so-called partial Jews with other so-called 'full' Jews. In order to ensure that the Holocaust did not become overlooked, von Trotta contrasted the protest and attempts to rescue this group with the absence of the opposition to the deportation of thousands of Berlin Jews. In one scene as Klara travels across Berlin in her search for Hans, she witnesses a mass deportation. She refuses to look away as she passes by but her fellow passengers deliberately avert their gaze, not wanting to see, to acknowledge the deportees' suffering.⁴⁶⁹ From the very beginning contrasts are repeatedly evoked, starting with the segregation of intermarried and so-called partial Jews from the majority, in conversations between the detainees at Rosenstraße through to scenes of deportation, to the different fates of Fabian's parents, and Ruth's mother. At the end of the film, the joy of the families reunited on Rosenstraße contrasts with Ruth's trauma, with the discovery of her mother's deportation. In the very final intended scene, as already mentioned, von Trotta intended to juxtapose the arrival of the Auschwitz returnees with a deportation. Her final directions note that the returnees are hurried out of the train, only to witness scores of others forced into them. The horrified returnees, in the full knowledge of their destination, look downward, feeling guilty because they had survived, but know the majority will not. As the packed trains depart, the camera remains fixed on those inside, so as to reinforce the message that they will not have the same chance of survival as the intermarried returnees.⁴⁷⁰

Through this doubling of victim groups, the switching backwards and forwards between the events in Rosenstraße, and the deportations that continued regardless and without opposition, von Trotta drew attention to the attitudes and actions of ordinary Germans, reinforcing the fact that the majority did nothing; that although they knew,

⁴⁶⁹ Von Trotta, *Rosenstraße* Draft Screenplay 1, pp.68-69.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., p.139.

they did not want to know. As we have seen elsewhere, this critical confrontation with everyday complicity was an emerging theme at the time the screenplay was drafted. These scenes were subsequently written out of the final screenplay. Stuart Taberner observed that if *Rosenstraße* “had gone on to depict the fates of the many thousands of Berlin Jews on whose behalf no-one intervened, it would have been forced to confront the infinitely greater number of ordinary Germans in the minutiae of mass murder”.⁴⁷¹ This is precisely what von Trotta intended to do in the first screenplay. The focus in the mid-1990s on the greater suffering of German Jews and the complicity of ordinary Germans was displaced in the final version. This leaves us with the question of why. Editing out this section may be taken as an indicator of shifting perceptions and attitudes over the period from the mid-1990s to the turn of the millennium. Whilst von Trotta kept the Holocaust central, everyday complicity and guilt were effectively forgotten, hidden from view, obscured by this one incident of public opposition. This corroborates Daniela Berghahn’s observation that since 1990, West German filmmakers have tended to present less critical readings of the Nazi past.⁴⁷²

Von Trotta also doubled and contrasted the collective opposition of the protesters with the individual actions undertaken by Lena and Arthur, which was problematic. For all their determined and honourable efforts, von Trotta implied that the protest only ‘succeeded’ because of Arthur’s intervention in bringing it to Goebbels’ attention and making a calculated plea on their behalf. Moreover, Arthur’s intervention, it is implied, was also timely; von Trotta constructed a scene in which Himmler and other high-ranking members of the SS discussed the protest, resulting in the decision to take a hard line against the protesters – namely to force them to concede or be shot. However, the screenplay suggests that following Arthur’s intervention, Goebbels subsequently countermanded the order, saving the protesters at the very last minute. Von Trotta left no room for doubt here, she allowed a wounded aristocratic Wehrmacht officer to save both the protesters and the detainees because of his privileged access to the regime elite. In so doing, her original screenplay undermined the very idea that the civic courage of ordinary Germans could have had an impact. The original screenplay also drew a further problematic comparison. Von Trotta planned to intersperse the film with excerpts of archival footage of deportations and of the aerial bombing of Berlin by the

⁴⁷¹ Taberner, ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film’, p.367.

⁴⁷² Berghahn, ‘Post-1990 Screen Memories’, p.308.

RAF. This doubling of the Holocaust with the aerial war would have presented both non-Jewish and Jewish Germans as equal victims of Nazism and the war, without recourse to the different causes of each group's suffering.

Von Trotta's original screenplay was detailed and arguably more critical than the eventual film. Marc Silberman notes her interest in "charting a space to ask uncomfortable questions."⁴⁷³ She did not shy away from a critical depiction of ordinary Germans and their attitudes towards both German Jews and intermarried women, showing one woman informing on the protesters, and others profiting from the Holocaust. Klara's sister and brother-in-law, for example, have taken over a luxurious house, once owned by German Jews. When confronted by Klara, her sister Rosemarie is affronted, suggesting that the Jews are better off than the Germans.⁴⁷⁴ At the same time, von Trotta idealised the protesters, presenting them as martyrs, suffering for and because of German Jews. We see this in their steadfast defiance, but also through their husbands' conversations during their incarceration. When Fabian and Nathan Goldberg talk about their wives, for example Fabian explains that Lena could have pursued her musical career, if it hadn't been for him, and asks Nathan if he too ever reproaches himself for what his wife has had to endure. Nathan replies that he does, specifically for not listening to his wife in the first place, who – as the viewer learns in via a flashback sequence – had tried to convince him of the need to emigrate. Frau Goldberg, he suggests, had had to suffer a great deal because of him.⁴⁷⁵ Von Trotta not only presented the protesters as honourable victims, but even more problematically also allowed German Jews to take on guilt for the suffering inflicted upon them; guilt that as Jews they had caused their German wives such misery.

vii) Refining the Content and Reducing Critical Potential. Observations on the Additions and Alterations in the December 1995 Screenplay

Where the original screenplay had followed a chronological format, in the second version, von Trotta introduced a present-day framing narrative, setting the film over three time frames: the mid-1990s, 1943, and the later Weimar years. In this version, she introduced two new main characters: the American, namely the adult Ruth Süßmann, now an American journalist, and the archivist, who helps her in her research. The

⁴⁷³ Silberman, *German Cinema: Texts in Context*, p.212.

⁴⁷⁴ Von Trotta, *Rosenstraße* Draft Screenplay 1, p.88.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.107-108.

present day narrative begins on 27th February, on the anniversary of the first day of the Factory Action. Ruth arrives at the archives in Moabit. She is greeted warmly by the archivist, who has deduced that she has a personal interest in the events, even though she hasn't said anything to that effect. He smiles almost conspiratorially, before making a show of dusting off some files, handing them over and telling her she's the first to look at them. This is followed by a voiceover in which Ruth explains she has spent nearly a year researching at the archives, sometimes questioning why she felt compelled to do so, and then one day the archivist finally gave her the files she had long since asked for. The fact that the archivist has withheld them is puzzling. It may serve as a metaphor for the changing patterns of memory, from reluctance to willingness to confront memories of the Holocaust. A number of voiceovers – all by Ruth – are interspersed throughout the remainder of the screenplay, providing information about the events unfolding on screen. Initially, they were in English – perhaps in a nod to the plans to make *Rosenstraße* either a UK-German or US-German co-production that were prominent at the time – but they later switch into German.⁴⁷⁶

After the opening title sequence, the time frame shifts to 1943, and a wintry Berlin, where the young Ruth waits for her mother who has not returned home from her night shift. Perturbed by this she goes to her neighbours, who try to convince her not to worry, that her mother will likely return any minute. Disturbed by noise from the street, marking the arrival of the SS, Ruth flees back into her own flat and hides. She evades capture but all of her neighbours are taken away. Von Trotta then switches her focus to Lena, who we first see searching for her parents-in-law, learning from their neighbour that they had been arrested. Lena learns that Fabian has been arrested as well, and begins her search for him. We are then introduced to Klara as she discovers that her husband Hans has been arrested. The narrative then switches backwards and forwards between Lena, Klara and Ruth, each on their respective searches – with Ruth, as in the first draft briefly reunited with her mother. We are also introduced to other key characters including Fabian, Erika Schlesinger, Nathan Goldberg, and his wife.

The screenplay returns briefly to the present day, with the archivist looking in on Ruth, who is completely absorbed in her reading, before switching back to 1943. The

⁴⁷⁶ Equally the change in language could signify Ruth's returning to her roots, speaking in German rather than English. In all likelihood, the switch could also simply be an oversight that was not picked up on.

screenplay follows in a similar vein to the original version. There are more extensive flashbacks, but this time only for Lena and Fabian.⁴⁷⁷ Meanwhile Arthur takes a more extensive role. As before he endeavours to save Fabian, starting with a visit to von Weiz, who this time agrees to see what he can do, adding the caveat that the matter may be out of his hands. Arthur's next step is to visit Himmler, but he only succeeds in overhearing a conversation about the protest.⁴⁷⁸ Following on from this, he and Lena attend the film premiere, during which Arthur succeeds in influencing Goebbels. In addition, we see throughout the screenplay how Arthur's presence is revered by those around him. Lena's Nazi neighbours, for example, are reverential instead of spiteful when he is present, and later, when the SS threaten the protesters in Rosenstraße, his arrival brings the threat to an end. His influence also extends to Ruth, which proves decisive later on. Whilst Lena and Arthur attend the film premiere, Ruth is left alone. One of the aforementioned Nazi neighbours takes the opportunity to let herself into the flat in an attempt to glean information about who Ruth really is, she heeds Arthur's earlier advice and uses a false name, rather than reveal her Jewish heritage. The Nazi neighbour remains suspicious but can do nothing.

In contrast to the first version, both Klara and Hans play a reduced role – we learn nothing of their back-story, for example. Klara's suicide is discovered by an ordinary policeman rather than members of the Gestapo and SS, who had been sent to inform her of Hans' impending return. Where in the first version von Trotta showed his return, in the second this is conveyed via a voiceover, in which Ruth explains that the men were returned to a work camp where their wives could visit, but alas for some (i.e. Klara) this news arrived too late. This is juxtaposed with the joy at the release of the Rosenstraße detainees, and Ruth's own despair that her mother isn't amongst them. The final scenes of the screenplay return to the present day, with Ruth disclosing to the archivist her real identity, and the fact that she never saw her mother again. Together they visit Rosenstraße, and in an image replicating the young Ruth and Arthur, they stand solemnly in the street, with Ruth staring upwards at the building.

⁴⁷⁷ In her flashback Lena recalls that they almost missed their own wedding because they were practising for their upcoming concert that same evening, that only Arthur and Fabian's mother attended the service as witnesses and from there they returned to give their concert before heading for an evening's dancing at the Metropol club with Arthur. Later on in his flashback sequence, Fabian recalls their first meeting at the Berlin Philharmonic, where he persuades a shy and reluctant Lena to go for coffee.

⁴⁷⁸ Unlike the original version, this time von Trotta does not suggest Himmler made any decision over how they should deal with the protest.

Whilst von Trotta introduced several new aspects into her screenplay, she also removed other aspects – the archival footage for instance – almost entirely, if not completely. Von Trotta planned to keep only the air raid footage, excluding any of the deportations. Also, much less attention is paid to the so-called full-Jews. Similarly, whilst Fabian's parents are mentioned, and his mother features in one flashback scene, no further mention is made of them later in the screenplay. The only deportation von Trotta included was of the 25 men from Rosenstraße. Although these alterations removed the problematic doubling from the first screenplay, it left the Holocaust somewhat hidden from view, placing the focus more clearly on the detainees and protesters. Yet, von Trotta also excised other, problematic scenes, most notably the reconciliation between Lena and her mother, followed by Elise's asking for forgiveness from Fabian, and the scenes in which Klara sought and was refused help by the Catholic Church. A number of minor characters have also been written out.⁴⁷⁹ These exclusions permitted von Trotta to shorten the screenplay. Yet, they also focused attention on the protesters, on the heroic figures, and in so doing reduced the extent of social criticism from her screenplay.⁴⁸⁰

2) Thematic Analysis of Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*

In October 2000 a third draft screenplay was put forward. Von Trotta obtained financial backing from Tele-München-Gruppe and Studio Hamburg Letterbox Production, with Dutch company Get Reel Productions subsequently joining the team, turning *Rosenstraße* into a Dutch-German co-production, which obtained further support from various film funds in Germany and in the Netherlands.⁴⁸¹ By the end of May 2002, with a budget of 6.5 million Euros, von Trotta could finally realise the project. Filming took

⁴⁷⁹ These include the Rosenstraße resident who in the first version provided the women with hot tea whilst they held their vigil, and an unnamed woman who telephones the Gestapo to complain about the protest.

⁴⁸⁰ In addition to the changes noted in the body text, von Trotta made a number of minor alterations or exclusions. For example the Goldbergs were originally envisioned as a middle-aged couple with two children, but in the final version they are an elderly couple and whether they have any children is not mentioned. Why this alteration was made is not clear. Frau Goldberg is a strong, and vocal character, who is a key figure in the protest. Perhaps if she had been shown with two children in tow this might have deflected attention away from Ruth.

⁴⁸¹ Producer Richard Schöps stated that the initial funding would still have been insufficient but the alliance with *Get Reel Productions* resolved this issue. Richard Schöps, Production Notes, *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment. In addition to the above mentioned backers, the following German and Dutch film boards also provided support: FFF Filmfernsehfonds Bayern, Filmförderung Hamburg, Filmboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Eurimages, FFA, BKM, NCRV, Dutch Film Fund & CoBo Fund.

place over fifty-four days in November and December 2002 on location in Berlin, Potsdam, Hamburg, Munich and New York.⁴⁸²

The reasons this film was successful were multiple and varied. However, it seems likely that von Trotta's adoption of a mainstream heritage film approach was pivotal, given the commercial influence demonstrated by other films of this genre. Nevertheless, changes to its content are also significant. Whilst *Rosenstraße* was adapted to accommodate the commercial turn within the German film industry, the decline of the New German Cinema and rise of the heritage film, we can also see how the changes to its content reflected shifting values in the Berlin Republic. Like other films of the genre, *Rosenstraße* was fitting precisely because it depicted the past from a more celebratory perspective, leaving the viewer to rejoice at the Germans' rescue of German Jews, re-affirming faith in the symbiosis.

Amongst the key changes we find the introduction of ambiguity surrounding the cause of the detainees' release. To an extent this may be an attempt to reconcile the film with the developments in historical discourse. When von Trotta first wrote her screenplays, historical research was far less extensive, and the argument that the regime had intended to release the detainees had not yet been made. Yet, the ambiguity is there and it is articulated by Arthur. Arriving in Rosenstraße just before the detainees are released, he states: „Das soll alles bloß ein Mißverständnis sein.”⁴⁸³ Arthur's role, his personal impact on events, however, has been significantly reduced. Whilst von Trotta allows him to persuade von Weiz to intervene, his efforts at the film premiere this time go un-rewarded; Goebbels already knows about the protest and is uninterested in Arthur's views. Von Trotta's alterations thus removed any suggestion (in contrast to the first two screenplays) that an injured aristocratic Wehrmacht officer had saved the Rosenstraße detainees.

Significantly, von Trotta also excised any detail about the return of the twenty-five men deported to Auschwitz and later returned. Although we see Hans and the others driven away from Rosenstraße, von Trotta makes no mention of their return, or subsequent

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Dialogue Transcript from, *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

detention in the labour camp Groß-Beeren. This is a curious absence; especially as for some their 'return' is seen as an indication of extent of the wives' personal, and the protest's collective impact. Historian Joachim Neander, for example, has argued that the protest stopped the deportations, brought about the return of the Rosenstraße 25 (and 12 intermarried men deported from Große Hamburger Straße), and prevented the regime from carrying out future mass deportations of intermarried German Jews, for fear of the civilian unrest the protest proved it would engender.⁴⁸⁴ Yet, another reading is also possible. If von Trotta had shown their return, it might have cast doubt on the regime's real intention, questioning why the regime would have simply let them go. For the message of protest, of German heroism to be most effective, von Trotta needed to be able to show that the regime had had every intention of carrying out the deportations but were ultimately prevented from doing so. Furthermore, any mention of the Auschwitz returnees would have forced von Trotta to confront issues of Holocaust remembrance, and of disparities between the suffering experienced by different, and often less well-defined victim groups. Rather than detract from her 'happy ending' von Trotta simply left their return out of the film.

Deflecting attention away from Arthur's individual heroism, and from the Auschwitz returnees, had the effect that, attention shifted more towards the protesters, emphasising notions of victimhood and the suffering of 'good Germans' with whom the viewer may empathise. This is in line with the turn towards German victimhood in cultural discourses. The screenplay loses a critical edge as a result – showing how it fitted within the heritage genre in celebrating rare moments of successful heroism, of survival – whilst moving it further away from the New German Cinema approach, which von Trotta originally intended.

The alterations – both content-wise and structural, along with the additions von Trotta made in order to adapt the screenplay to fit with the requirements of heritage filmmaking, also underline the changing generational attitudes towards the Nazi past, exemplifying the shift away from confrontational remembering (even amongst second generation Germans, including von Trotta) towards greater empathy with the first, experiential generation that has emerged in the years since unification. Central to this is

⁴⁸⁴ Neander, 'Die Auschwitz-Rückkehrer vom 21.März 1943', pp.115-144; 'Die Rosenstraße von außen gesehen – Wechsel der Perspektiven', pp.163-202.

the idea of the transgenerational dialogue in which empathy for members of the first experiential generation is articulated by members of the third. Von Trotta, as we have seen, introduced a framing narrative into the second draft in order to shorten the screenplay. In that instance Ruth was re-introduced as an adult, an American journalist conducting research. In the final version, the adult Ruth has been displaced by her daughter Hannah, and who, rather than as a journalist, presents herself as a historian; a factor that perhaps also reflects the actual increase in historical research into the events. This framing narrative enables von Trotta to contextualise and to explain the events. Hannah is present so that the viewer may understand more easily the events unfolding on screen.

Von Trotta's use of the transgenerational dialogue also reflects the broader generational shifts and trends identified above, in which the transgenerational dialogue has begun displacing the earlier generational conflict between the first and second generation, which tended to focus on confrontation between members of the second generation (i.e. those born during or shortly after the Second World War) with their parents (who experienced the Third Reich first hand as adults). Von Trotta's film varies generational confrontation, showing a parent-child confrontation between those who experienced National Socialism as young children, and their own offspring. In both cases, however, we note that the children seek recourse to the grandparent generation. What is different in this case, is that the offspring seek to confront their parents' silence about events they were witnesses to, were traumatised, perhaps also defined by, but were ultimately not responsible for, unlike second generation Germans, who confronted their parents' role, guilt and responsibility. As a child of the Nazi period, and moreover as a victim, Ruth, we understand, has suppressed her memories. It is her own child, Hannah, who forces her to confront, to deal with the past that she does not wish to, to break the silence in order to heal the rift.

i) The Function of Transgenerational and Generational Dialogues in *Rosenstraße*

The thematisation of generational confrontation and transgenerational dialogue enabled von Trotta to introduce the themes of memory suppression, trauma and ultimately resolution, through which questions of Jewish and non-Jewish suffering could be explored together. In addition, it also enabled her to retain an element of social

criticism, albeit one that is projected outwards towards the United States. In the course of her research, von Trotta became interested in post-Holocaust histories of survivors who emigrated to the United States, and the fact that they were initially encouraged to forget the Holocaust, and their European heritage in order to embrace the American way of life.⁴⁸⁵ Forgetting was impossible, resulting instead in memory suppression and in many cases the belated reappearance of trauma decades later.⁴⁸⁶ Winkle has suggested that von Trotta employed this theme in order to highlight “the importance of remembering for survivors and their families.”⁴⁸⁷ Yet, it can also be understood as a displacement of guilt coupled with a desire for redemption in which it is implied that American dominance had prevented both Holocaust survivors and non-Jewish Germans from engaging in a necessary and desired *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, inflicting further trauma on Holocaust victims in the process, but from which Germans may now – in the Berlin Republic – rescue them. If Germans can in effect rescue Jews, their earlier failures may perhaps be overcome or lessened, thus also paving the way for a less problematic, if not an unencumbered, relationship, a sense of unity, togetherness even, in the longer term.

This theme runs throughout the film. In the opening scenes the viewer can deduce that Ruth has been affected by this initial, post-war memory suppression and that the sudden, unexpected death of her husband proved to be the catalyst for the resurgence of her earlier, childhood traumas. However, it is also implied that by the end of the film she will have overcome this trauma, aided by her daughter and her adoptive German mother.

Von Trotta’s criticisms of the post-war American policy and its impact on Holocaust survivors is both reflected in and articulated by the character Rachel Rosenbauer. She appears as a mysterious character, who although unknown to the guests, shares a difficult and fraught past with Ruth; she is in fact her cousin. Unable to repress her own frustration at Ruth’s behaviour towards her, she tells her: “Erst wenn du bereit bist, uns

⁴⁸⁵ Eva Hoffmann has similarly drawn attention to this. See her *After Such Knowledge: A Mediation on the Aftermath of the Holocaust*. London: Vintage, pp.165-168.

⁴⁸⁶ Margarethe von Trotta cited in Wiebel, M., 2003. *Rosenstraße. Film-Heft*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, p. 9.

⁴⁸⁷ Winkle, ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, pp.436-437.

zu verzeihen, wirst du Ruhe finden.”⁴⁸⁸ She then departs, saying that this time she’s giving up forever, but Hannah implores her to explain who she is and how she knows her mother.

Rachel relays Ruth’s story from the time of her arrival in America. She explains that after the war her own parents, who had fled to the USA in 1933, sent for Ruth to live with them instead of leaving her with her adopted family in Berlin. However, Rachel concedes that she had been intensely jealous of her cousin – generated by her own childhood anxiety that her own mother may prefer Ruth – and that this had determined her behaviour towards her accordingly. Rachel shows Hannah a photograph of Ruth together with Lena, explaining how at night Ruth would secretly look at the photograph and cry, but Rachel, not wanting Ruth to draw attention to herself, would curse her, tell her to shut up and be quiet because all the crying was stopping her from sleeping. This childhood jealousy, this active suppression of Ruth’s trauma and suffering by her American born cousin is a metaphor for the post-war American approach towards Holocaust survivors. Rachel’s understandable but egotistical behaviour is symbolic of America’s stance. Her self-castigation functions as a synecdoche for von Trotta’s criticism of the United States, but at the same time it also legitimises the focus on a joint exploration of Jewish and non-Jewish suffering that follows in the film.

Von Trotta twins the absence of the Holocaust from public discourses in the US and the FRG until the 1960s, inferring that Germany was, in effect, no worse in the post-war years than the US.⁴⁸⁹ Yet, this equation of the US with the FRG overlooks the different causes of its absence in each country – to facilitate assimilation and the acquisition of an American identity on the one hand, versus an unwillingness to confront guilt and responsibility on the other hand. In *Rosenstraße* it seems, that distinction no longer matters. The fact that Ruth’s story is re-told from the perspective of the ‘good German’ who rescued her, rather than from Ruth’s own, suggests that by the turn of the millennium Germans, von Trotta included, wished to reclaim their heritage, and to re-

⁴⁸⁸ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

⁴⁸⁹ Eric Rentschler noted that in the New German Cinema there was a preoccupation with America and Hollywood as objects of post-war German love/hatred; von Trotta’s position is perhaps an extension of that. It may also reflect the gradual shift in attitudes and anti-US sentiment across Europe at the beginning of the millennium. See his: *From New German Cinema to a Post-Wall Cinema of Consensus*, p.271.

tell it 'on their own terms' to borrow Helmut Schmitz's phrase, and also further reinforces *Rosenstraße*'s status as heritage film.⁴⁹⁰

ii) The Depiction of Jewish and non-Jewish Suffering in *Rosenstraße*

In his article on heritage cinema of the 1990s, Lutz Koepnick argued that these films tended to "imply Jews and non-Jews suffered the same damages, losses and traumas," and established "a framework in which the Holocaust produces something good and meaningful" whilst Daniela Berghahn has suggested that such films "construct an ambiguous memory of Jewish suffering that allows us to forget while ostensibly inviting us to remember."⁴⁹¹ As a recent German heritage film, it could be assumed that von Trotta followed the same pattern with *Rosenstraße*. Whilst Berghahn suggests that it invites "contemporary audiences to identify emotionally with the suffering of Jews and Germans," and that it "subliminally assimilates Germans into a general sense of victimhood by suggesting that the trauma of loss [...] affected Germans and Jews in equal measure," conversely Wilcock and Winkle both point out that von Trotta attempted to differentiate between Jewish and non-Jewish suffering and loss.⁴⁹² Although von Trotta aligns German and Jewish suffering closely, suggesting they are interconnected, she attempts to show that they are also distinct from one another. Moreover, the entire film is framed with visual allusions to Jewish symbolism and the Holocaust, suggesting that von Trotta sought to locate non-Jewish suffering within the wider narrative of Jewish suffering. *Rosenstraße* depicts different levels of suffering. These are represented visually, metaphorically, aurally and orally, as explored below.

Von Trotta demonstrates both Jewish and non-Jewish suffering by doubling and paralleling characters and situations in the film. This allows her to highlight the different experiences of the Jewish and non-Jewish characters. Throughout the course of her interviews, for example, Hannah finds that the elderly Lena, who at first seemed willing to remember, suddenly resists straying into areas that are too painful, namely the separation from Ruth, but "persists in probing the blind spots in Lena's account of

⁴⁹⁰ Daniela Berghahn makes a similar point. See her 'Post-1990 Screen Memories', p.305.

⁴⁹¹ Koepnick, 'Re-framing the Past', p.72; Berghahn, 'Post-1990 Screen Memories', p.302.

⁴⁹² Wilcock, E., 28 July 2004. 'FORUM: *Rosenstrasse* solicited response'. *H-Net Multimedia Review. H-German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=766>. [Accessed 29 July 2005]; Winkle, 'Feminist Re-Visions' of a Historical Controversy, p.439 and p.444.

the past,” and is eventually successful in obtaining the details of her mother’s story.⁴⁹³ On one level this provided a narrative device through which to establish what happened to Ruth. However, it also allowed Ruth and Lena’s memories of the Factory Action to be excavated in tandem with one another, in the process of which the viewer sees that however much Lena suffers, it is Ruth who suffers far more. We see this in numerous examples. They both pass each other on their respective searches for Fabian and Miriam, but even here it is evident that it is Ruth who is infinitely more traumatised, not only because she is a so-called partial Jew, but because she is a vulnerable, innocent child, who by the end of the film will lose her mother, and repress her own identity, her own grief, in order to survive.

As the protest later gains momentum, and the participants begin to chant, „wir wollen unsere Männer wiederhaben” Ruth joins in, but rather than calling for her mother’s release, she echoes their chant, reminding the viewer that she had to suppress her own suffering and desires in order to blend in, and so as not draw attention to herself for the wrong reasons. Ruth’s fear is palpable and manifests itself in particular when she is left alone, as we see in the scenes in which Lena leaves Ruth alone whilst she is sleeping and goes back to Rosenstraße, attempting – unsuccessfully as it transpires – to gain access to Rosenstraße and to Fabian. Ruth wakes to find Lena gone. Alone, confused and afraid, she hears approaching footsteps and hides, closing her eyes tight as she had done on the first morning of the Factory Action. The footsteps however, are Lena’s. Ruth’s fear is tempered with an initial relief. Her fear of abandonment, however, is evident when she tells Lena: „Ich hatte Angst du kommst nicht mehr zurück” subsequently seeking reassurance asking „gehst du bestimmt nicht wieder weg?”⁴⁹⁴ The viewer can see that although Lena suffers and her actions are prompted by her own state of desperation, her suffering is nothing in comparison to Ruth’s, onto whom her actions inflicted further and unnecessary anxiety. As the scene switches back to the present day, an elderly Lena explains to Hannah: „Ich habe hinterher ein furchtbar schlechtes Gewissen gehabt.” Her statement reinforces the difference between her own and Ruth’s trauma.

⁴⁹³ Berghahn, ‘Post-1990 Screen Memories’, p.305.

⁴⁹⁴ Dialogue transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

Although Lena undeniably experienced hardship during the Third Reich, her experience was far different from Ruth's.⁴⁹⁵ In one scene they try to explain to Arthur the various living conditions imposed on Jewish households. Whilst Lena's response is one of fury at the regime, Ruth's is one of deep sadness. Their differing responses draw attention to their differing circumstances. When Arthur declares his intention to go to the Reich Main Security Office to plead Fabian's case, and Lena tells him she's already tried, Arthur retorts that once Fabian is on a train there is nothing anyone can do to get him back, and that he at least has to try and save him. Ruth asks if he will also try on her mother's behalf. Although Arthur replies he will, both he and the viewer know Miriam cannot be saved – the viewer has already seen that she has been removed from Rosenstraße, implying she has already been deported. This juxtaposition thus underlines that whilst for Lena there is hope, the reality for Ruth is that there is no chance her mother will be saved, even if Arthur keeps her hope alive for a time. Whilst circumstances have brought them together, their situations remain incomparable.

The most poignant juxtaposition, however, features towards the end of the film. As one by one the detainees are released, Ruth's face is full of hope. When the door is opened she whispers, „jetzt” in anticipation of the reunion with her mother, only for pain to cross her face when it is someone else who emerges and is greeted joyfully. Ruth's pain is heightened when Fabian is released – seeing Lena's joy only throws her own anguish into sharper relief, that is not lessened any by her introduction to Fabian as 'their daughter'. With Lena and Fabian reunited, Ruth continues to hope her mother will return. She is accompanied in her vigil by Arthur and together they remain in the street. Ruth asks: „Meine Mutti, wann kommt meine Mutti?” Arthur's silence is a reply in itself, but the camera position moves from eye-level up to look into the window of an empty room so as to visually reinforce the fact that her mother is no longer there. The scene lingers on the empty room, so as to remind the viewer that the majority of German Jews did not survive, and that this factor shouldn't be obscured by the rescue of those in Rosenstraße.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵ Winkle makes a similar point on this. See her "Feminist Re-Visions' of a Historical Controversy', p.440.

⁴⁹⁶ See also Wilcock, E., 28 July 2004. 'FORUM: Rosenstrasse_ solicited response'. *H-Net Multimedia Review H-German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=766>. [Accessed 29 July 2005].

As the time frame switches back to the present day, von Trotta persists in reinforcing the different causes and levels of suffering. Lena's face expresses her joy that Ruth had come to live with them, even whilst she recounts how Ruth cried endlessly. Lena is lost in the joy of unexpected, albeit short-lived motherhood. Lena's subsequent pain at the loss of Ruth is twinned with Ruth's own anguish. However, the difference is still reinforced in Lena's explanation that she had not wanted to let her go but she had no right to keep her. When Hannah asks why she never told Ruth of her own distress at having to relinquish her, Lena replies that Ruth had already suffered enough, ergo she did not need to be burdened with Lena's suffering as well. Contrasting Lena and Ruth in this way allowed von Trotta to reinforce that although their suffering was inextricably linked, it had different and distinct causes. Moreover, Lena's suffering at the loss of Ruth could only be understood in the wider context of Ruth's story, hence von Trotta suggests that non-Jewish suffering can only be understood within the framework of Jewish suffering.

Von Trotta also draws the viewers' attention to the different levels of suffering through oral and aural representation. To put it another way, whilst Lena talks, Ruth refuses to speak about the past, even if, as the viewer sees, her memories now return unbidden.⁴⁹⁷ Lena talks freely – at least up to the point where her memories of Ruth become too painful, requiring Hannah to coax and cajole them from her – yet Ruth remains silent. Whilst Lena's memories flow in the form of an abnormally coherent, chronological narrative relaying the events from start to finish, Ruth's are disrupted.⁴⁹⁸ Yet, Ruth's silence is arguably as revealing as Lena's spoken narrative, aurally and orally reinforcing the different levels of suffering, its causes, and the possibilities of articulating it. Ruth never speaks a word about what she experienced, yet we can see the pain of recollection, from her shock at the beginning of the film, when in her mind's eye she is transported back to 1943, and sees her mother looking at her, through to her anguish as she recalls seeing Klara's corpse the morning after her suicide. Even when Hannah returns from Berlin, returning the ring (which Ruth's mother had given to her, and which Ruth had thrown at Lena as she left for America) and Lena's message that it once again has the power to fulfil wishes, Ruth does not engage with her past trauma,

⁴⁹⁷ On this see Winkle, 'Feminist Re-Visions' of a Historical Controversy', p.440.

⁴⁹⁸ Lena's memories flow coherently and chronologically for the sake of the narrative structure, however personal memories are generally typified by their disjointed and inconsistent nature.

or inquire after Lena, rather she passes the ring back to Hannah, saying in that case she should keep it.⁴⁹⁹

These aural and oral representations of suffering suggest that Lena can put her experience into words precisely because her suffering is the lesser, and that the events in Rosenstraße are associated not only with pain and uncertainty but with the joy of the protesters' apparent triumph, with the reunion with Fabian, the assurance of their future together and her unexpected chance at motherhood. For Ruth memories are in contrast inextricably bound with the loss of her own mother, of their chance of a future together. Moreover any semblance of security, of family she had begun to rebuild, was once again taken away from her when she was sent to America. Ruth's silence is at once an expression of her own greater suffering and a metaphor for the suffering of Holocaust victims.

It is not only through Ruth and Lena's relationship that von Trotta tried to prioritise the suffering of Holocaust victims over and above any non-Jewish experience. She also drew parallels between Lena and Miriam, Ruth's mother. Whilst the viewer learns of Lena's pain at eventually losing Ruth, they know this is nothing to the sacrifice Ruth's mother made. Even when Ruth found her way into Rosenstraße, Miriam found the courage to set her free and thus save her from sharing her own fate, knowing that in all likelihood she would never again see her daughter. During her subsequent interrogation she unwittingly reveals that she has a daughter, but she instantly tries to protect her, lying about Ruth's whereabouts so that no one will look for her. By the end of the film von Trotta hints at the possibility of reconciliation between Ruth and Lena, facilitated by Hannah, but this possibility throws the fact that there can be no reunion with Miriam into sharp relief.

Von Trotta does not allow her viewer to forget that in spite of the protest in Rosenstraße, the Holocaust continued unchallenged. She contrasts the number of detainees in the former synagogue with the later, lesser numbers detained in Rosenstraße. Fabian's fate, in turn, is contrasted with that of his parents, who we later see amongst the deportees at Levetzowstraße, and who are subsequently joined by

⁴⁹⁹ This also functions as a metaphor for Ruth's acceptance of Hannah's marriage to Luis. It is Hannah's wish that they marry and by giving her the ring, Ruth demonstrates her approval.

Miriam, after she has been removed from Rosenstraße. Moreover, von Trotta also actively deflects anything that may direct attention away from Jewish persecution. As Evelyn Wilcock observed, although Hannah learns that Ruth's father, Paul abandoned his wife and daughter, she pursues no line of enquiry as to what happened to him, lest it should detract from the focus on Jewish persecution.⁵⁰⁰ The original screenplays show that von Trotta had initially planned to allow Ruth to refer to the fact that her father was serving on the Eastern Front. That she excised any reference to his war service can be taken as a further indication of her intention to keep the focus firmly on Jewish rather than non-Jewish suffering.

iii) Allegorical References to the Holocaust

As we have seen, von Trotta's doublings and parallels allowed her to demonstrate that the suffering experienced by Jewish Germans was greater than their non-Jewish counterparts. In addition, she also framed the film with allegorical references to the Holocaust and its continuing influence in the present day. This she did by creating visual allusions to Jewish iconography. From the very opening scene to the closing dialogue the entire film is framed by references Jewish life and to the Shoah. Von Trotta uses a number of devices to illustrate this, the first of which is the stone motif.

The opening scene focuses in close-up on a gravestone engraved with the word father, followed by another engraved with the word husband. This provides a reference to the death of Hannah's father, Ruth's husband, but it also has a wider significance in the context of the film. The camera steadily zooms outwards, in stages, as if in the blink of an eye, taking in more of the scene until we have a panorama of the entire graveyard, Mount Zion, the largest Jewish cemetery in New York. Even if the specific site is unknown to the viewer, it is evident that this is a Jewish graveyard, by virtue of the carvings on the headstones, as well as the demonstrative absence of flowers, which by contrast would indicate a Christian graveyard. The camera continues to pan outwards, showing ever more graves, ever more stone until it gradually takes in the New York skyline. Although on an immediate level this locates the site in the viewer's mind, it has a greater allegorical significance, enabling von Trotta to continue with the stone motif,

⁵⁰⁰ Wilcock, E., 28 July 2004. 'FORUM: Rosenstrasse_ solicited response'. *H-Net Multimedia Review H-German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=766>. [Accessed 29 July 2005].

scaling it upwards, and into the “stone desert” as von Trotta described New York.⁵⁰¹ This gradual panning outwards from the first, individual grave to the multiple graves, and up to the stone buildings that make up New York, providing a visual continuity with the graveyard, allows New York or rather its architecture to appear as a never-ending graveyard, the anonymous stone buildings providing an allegory of anonymous mass death, of mass, unmarked graves, and thus to the Holocaust.

This process of moving from the individual to the anonymous collective is then reversed as the film shifts to the scenes in Ruth’s flat. In her audio commentary von Trotta suggested the stone motif alluded to the spirits of the dead, marching ever inwards towards the city ending at Ruth’s flat, refocusing on the individual.⁵⁰² The scenes depicting Shiva rituals have been particularly criticised by reviewers, but the significance von Trotta attached to them is clear.⁵⁰³ Hiding behind orthodox ritual is a means by which Ruth tries but is ultimately unable to get away from memories of her past, and from her mother’s deportation. The ghosts von Trotta refers to have returned, and hence no barrier Ruth hides behind is impermeable to them. In the end Ruth will have to face her ghosts, her trauma. Amongst the other significant rituals performed, we see the lighting of the candle of remembrance, which traditionally should remain lit for a week. It is also imbued with further meaning when we consider that in the film the protest also lasted for a week, and was described by Lena as a ray of light in the darkness.⁵⁰⁴ Throughout the film, von Trotta switches back to the candle of remembrance. It is replaced three times, and each time marks a change in the narrative direction, and the deaths of three individuals: Robert Weinstein, Miriam Süßmann, and Klara Singer. Yet, the candle of remembrance also serves as a symbol of the eternal light, not just for these three individuals, but also for all Jewish victims, so as to keep them present in the viewer’s mind.

⁵⁰¹ Audio Commentary from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

⁵⁰³ Noah, ‘Willkommen seid ihr, Klischees’, p.12.

⁵⁰⁴ The period of one week marks the average time the detainees spent in Rosenstraße and the average period of the protest. However, some detainees were released within hours or days of their arrest, others were not arrested until several days after the Factory Action and protest had begun, whilst others, particularly what Beate Meyer refers to as the *Klärungsfälle* remained in Rosenstraße for up to six weeks. On this see Meyer, ‘Die Inhaftierung der „jüdisch Versippten”’, pp.178-197. See also Ullstein, H., 1961. *Spielplatz meines Lebens. Erinnerung*. Munich: Kindler. Ullstein was one of the *Klärungsfällen*, as his memoirs state.

The final symbolic reference takes the form of a blessing. In a flashback scene von Trotta transports the viewer back to 1932, to the evening of Lena and Fabian's concert. Following the recital Fabian's parents come backstage to congratulate the couple, and express their pride. With the words "Segen auf dein Haupt, mein Kind," Fabian's mother blesses Lena, welcoming her into the family. Lena later makes the decision that she and Fabian will marry.⁵⁰⁵ This blessing also provides the closing line in the film. Ruth imparts the same blessing to Luis upon his marriage to Hannah. The blessing signifies Ruth's acceptance of the marriage, welcoming the newcomer into the family. Moreover, it allowed von Trotta to echo Fabian's mother's voice forwards through time, allowing the viewer to recall who first imparted this blessing and her eventual fate. In the midst of embracing the future, Ruth's words ensure that the viewer may not simply forget the Holocaust.

As we have seen in this section, *Rosenstraße* deviates from other heritage films in so far as it suggests that Jewish and non-Jewish Germans experienced different levels of suffering, and non-Jewish suffering was always lesser, a subtext within the wider narrative of the Holocaust. Yet, in other ways we have seen that *Rosenstraße* fits with trends in German heritage film. For example, the breakdown of the German-Jewish relationship is presented as a tragedy, one which Germans, even the 'good' ones, had to endure. The audience is invited to identify emotionally with the 'good' Germans and to weep for the tragic consequences foisted upon them because of Nazism.⁵⁰⁶ In the case of *Rosenstraße* the audience is allowed to lament that even though Lena did not want to send Ruth to the US, she felt she had no other choice, and suffered in silence as a consequence. The viewer is invited to empathise with Lena – the good German, who in spite of everything, is not allowed to keep the child she had taken in and protected, and this we understand is the legacy of Nazism. As a German, albeit a good one, she was not trusted to raise a Jewish child in the new, post-war world. This is Lena's punishment, which serves as a metaphor for the Germans' loss of any right to a healthy, positive German-Jewish relationship after 1945, but suggesting this is something non-Jewish Germans have borne with an unhappy but quiet fortitude.

⁵⁰⁵ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment. This contrasts starkly with Lena's own parents who are notable through their absence backstage, signifying their disapproval and Fabian's exclusion from the Eschenbach family in contrast to Lena's welcome into the Fischer family.

⁵⁰⁶ For comparative purposes, see: Koepnick, 'Reframing the Past', p.72.

iv) Multiple Victims in *Rosenstraße*

Although von Trotta distinguished between the different levels of suffering, she did indicate a causal link between the two, implying moreover that Jews and non-Jews were ultimately unified through their collective experiences of their mutual enemy – the Nazi. This allowed von Trotta to generate empathy for the average, ordinary German. In its depictions of victimhood, *Rosenstraße* builds on tropes established in earlier films, falsely suggesting the majority of ordinary Germans were either overtly or discreetly anti-Nazi, irrespective of whether they had any direct connections to German-Jews. Stuart Taberner suggests filmic representations distinguish *inter alia* between Nazi brutes (SS and Gestapo), patrician elites who tolerate the regime's cruelty, fearful fellow travellers, and ordinary Germans, who demonstrated humanity and empathy.⁵⁰⁷ We find all of these in *Rosenstraße*, where complicity and individual responsibility is either forgotten or forgiven, and all but a few are re-imagined as passive victims of Nazism, which is seen as an entirely un-German phenomenon imposed on an unwilling nation.

Von Trotta clearly distinguishes the perpetrators from all others. In *Rosenstraße* the real Nazis are few and vastly outnumbered by humane and enlightened Germans. This contrasts with earlier versions, which displayed a more diverse society.⁵⁰⁸ Yet, in the film only the Nazis are truly culpable. Even the patrician elites are susceptible to feelings of guilt, and a sense of having been taken in by the regime, as embodied by Lena and Arthur's father Baron von Eschenbach. That he tried to make a deal with Fabian – to buy him a passage to freedom in England as a refugee in exchange for divorcing Lena – marks him out as a Machiavellian anti-Semite, but not one who would necessarily, willingly endorse genocide. When confronted by Arthur he dismisses him, suggesting he's been duped by *Greuelmärchen aus Radio London*, but is visibly shocked, and struggles to comprehend when Arthur details the atrocities he'd witnessed himself.⁵⁰⁹ This reaction allowed von Trotta to humanise his character, showing that whilst he is deplorable he is nevertheless distinct from the regime he had supported.

⁵⁰⁷ Taberner, 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film', p.363 and p.367.

⁵⁰⁸ In the second draft, she created a scene in which Lena passing *Rosenstraße* by tram, asks her fellow passenger if that's the Jewish Social Welfare building over there and is greeted with the reply that yes it was but thank God they no longer get any charity. Von Trotta, *Rosenstraße* Draft Screenplay 2, p.21.

⁵⁰⁹ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

More worryingly, it allows him to be presented as less culpable, abdicating his personal responsibility by implying that although he is abhorrent, he has been misled, so as to suggest he, and others like him, are not wholly irredeemable.

Von Trotta even plays down certain Nazi figures. Arthur's friend, Wilhelm von Weiz, for example, an officer at the Air Ministry, is first and foremost a military man, not a committed Nazi but just someone motivated by self-interest and a sense of duty. Arthur himself is integrated into the victim category – most obviously as the injured soldier, but von Trotta also hints that he is traumatised by the atrocities he witnessed, as we see in his distress in the aforementioned confrontation with the Baron. Von Trotta leaves out any suggestion of his involvement in them, however, even though the photographs he shows to von Weiz place him directly at the scene of a mass killing. Yet, the viewer is invited to overlook this, to see his anguish and to concentrate instead on his endeavours to save Fabian and to support Lena and Ruth. Von Trotta places him in the protest so that he may be juxtaposed with the SS elite, and the once widely accepted but subsequently discredited image of the honourable, ordinary German soldier to be at least partly redeemed in the process.⁵¹⁰

Other lesser characters also appear as sympathetic individuals caught up in unfortunate circumstances, forced to make difficult choices, or even fearful of the consequences of non-compliance. The desk sergeant at the police station, for example, tells Lena that if the Gestapo would not give her information about Fabian's whereabouts, then regrettably neither could he, suggesting that although he was sympathetic the situation was simply beyond his control. One of the Rosenstraße guards is, as Taberner points out, quietly indulgent of the women's protest.⁵¹¹ Similarly, Herr Müller, Klara's boss symbolises the fearful fellow traveller. As an industrialist Müller was also a member of the Nazi Party.⁵¹² He cuts an anxious figure, afraid to step out of line, yet he quietly empathises with his employee and the difficult circumstances she is faced with. When he learns of Klara's involvement in the protest he tells her to stay away as much as she needs but not to tell him anything – he's too afraid of the consequences. Von Trotta

⁵¹⁰ The image of the honourable German soldier was discredited through the Crimes of the Wehrmacht travelling exhibition, which began in 1995, around the same time as von Trotta was originally drafting her screenplay.

⁵¹¹ Taberner, 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film', p.366.

⁵¹² Industrialists were obliged to be party members and in Herr Müller's case it is suggested he joined out of professional necessity rather than political conviction.

presents him as a victim of circumstance, complicit but uncomfortable with the regime, who may be pitied rather than despised.

German society as it is re-imagined in *Rosenstraße* is also shaped by what is referred to but never depicted. Von Trotta extends notions of victimhood to include now divorced intermarried partners, specifically ex-husbands. In *Rosenstraße*, divorce of the Jewish spouse is undertaken exclusively by husbands, never by wives, in spite of statistical and anecdotal evidence to the contrary.⁵¹³ Even though Paul Süßmann's decision led to Miriam's deportation, he too is afforded understanding, seen as a victim forced to make a difficult decision in trying circumstances.⁵¹⁴ Lena responds to Hannah's outrage at her maternal grandfather by explaining away his actions rather than condemning him. She remarks: "Vielleicht war er ja nur schwach. Viele Männer haben den Druck nicht ausgehalten. Schließlich hätten sie an ihre Karrieren denken müssen."⁵¹⁵

Lena's explanation goes some way towards exculpating Paul. It allows him to appear vulnerable and compromised, rather than callous and culpable. It also simultaneously reinforces the idea of loyal, steadfast wives, in contrast to the weak men. By suggesting he is another victim of circumstance von Trotta circumvents notions of individual responsibility and guilt. Her approach reflects the rediscovery of discourses of German victimhood already discussed elsewhere in this thesis. But it is also evidence of a worrying trend in which explorations of victimhood have led to a revision of notions of personal responsibility, and complicity.

v) Christian Iconography in Constructions of Resistance and Opposition

As with the other representations examined in this thesis, in von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* acts of resistance are central, and are tied with conceptions of identity. Whilst the protest takes centre stage, and is the most significant, it sits alongside other acts of dissent, and attempts to undermine the regime. They also have distinctively religious,

⁵¹³ Meyer, B., 2004. 'Geschichte im Film: Judenverfolgung, Mischehen und der Protest in der Rosenstraße 1943'. *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52, pp.23-36. See also the interviews with Erika Lewin and Miriam Rosenberg in Schröder, *Die Frauen der Rosenstraße*, pp.97-132, and pp.163-191.

⁵¹⁴ As Beate Meyer observes up to the age of 14 technically a child could protect their Jewish parent in spite of their divorce, although in practice this was not always the case. See her 'Geschichte im Film', p.29

⁵¹⁵ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

that is to say Christian overtones, which are largely, although not exclusively expressed through the female characters. Religious iconography is far from a new feature of German films about the Nazi past, but its appearance in post-unification films tends to follow specific patterns, affirming values and ideals. In his article on images of Christian martyrdom David Clarke argues that films allow an “admiration of a protagonist who represents not simply Christianity but a set of values that can be subscribed to by the contemporary viewer without direct recourse to religious faith,” in which “a German national community based on liberal, humane and democratic values is constructed in the past in opposition to the Nazi racial community.”⁵¹⁶ This is also applicable to readings of *Rosenstraße*. Von Trotta invites the viewer to relate to, even admire the German protagonists, their values and actions, for their ‘otherness’ to the National Socialists. However, von Trotta neither identifies such features as explicitly Christian, nor suggests that the individuals were motivated by faith. Religion is subsumed and presented instead as part of anti-racist values and ideals, which the viewer may identify with.

The protest itself has two symbolic parallels. In *Rosenstraße* it builds gradually from the first day of the Factory Action, culminating with the release of the detainees; this takes place over seven days. Von Trotta has indicated that a parallel was intended between the duration of the protest and the Shiva mourning period that Ruth observes following her husband’s death.⁵¹⁷ Hence it symbolises mourning for a way of life that has now passed. However, the protest is also a metaphor for Creation. We note that it increased in intensity day by day, and on the seventh day the detainees were released, indicating that the protesters’ work was done, that the seventh day became a day of rest. In this analogy, the period prior to the protest signifies a void, a darkness from which the new world will emerge. The values and ideals that endured the period of Creation will therefore be carried forward, shaping the future. In drawing this parallel, *Rosenstraße* invests in the idea of an ideal new German-Jewish world in which the might of the Nazi regime is vanquished, allowing Jews and non-Jews to go forward into the future arm in arm, just as the protesters and detainees do. It invites the viewer to

⁵¹⁶ Clarke, D., 2010. ‘German Martyrs: Images of Christianity and Resistance to National Socialism in German Cinema’. In: P. Cooke, and M. Silberman, eds. *Screening War: Perspectives on German Suffering*. Woodbridge and New York: Camden House, pp. 36-55, here p.51.

⁵¹⁷ Audio Commentary from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

believe in this world, suggesting that through resistance, it, or rather Germany, has been re-born. Moreover, it is women who have brought this new world into being, suggesting that it will also differ from the male world that had gone before. This religious parallel functions as a synecdoche giving expression to a desire for an ideal new world, a new Germany, one in which Jews and non-Jews may be united.

We find further Christian motifs in the individual characters. Von Trotta incorporated the parable of the Good Samaritan, transposing it into the context of Nazi Germany, allowing Lena, the Christian German woman to assume the role of the Samaritan. The choice of parable is particularly pertinent in this context when we consider that the traveller who is aided by the Samaritan is assumed to be Jewish, an enemy, the Samaritan's other. Nevertheless the Samaritan puts aside racial and ethnic prejudice, aiding the Jew in his hour of need, suggesting that former enmity can be overcome.

In *Rosenstraße*, Ruth – the vulnerable, traumatised Jewish child, robbed of her mother, is associated with the beaten, robbed Jewish traveller who has been left for dead by the side of the road, and is rescued by her good Samaritan in the guise of Lena, the non-Jewish German. Von Trotta re-tells this act of defiance as a Samaritan like act, as a narrative of civic courage, humanity, tolerance of others, particularly the persecuted, and an enlightened moral outrage at anti-Semitism and at National Socialism. It resonates with a wider audience because Ruth's rescue is cast as an act of Samaritan kindness. It links the story with what David Clarke has identified as the "moral framework" which is deemed to be inherent in the German nation.⁵¹⁸ Yet, in drawing on Christian tradition, von Trotta excludes Jews from the German nation.

In addition, von Trotta also incorporated notions of atonement, sacrifice and martyrdom through the characters of Arthur, Miriam, Klara and the protesters as a collective group. In *Rosenstraße* atonement is utilised as a way of highlighting guilt, so that von Trotta may show Germans have recognised and sought to answer for their crimes: they have atoned and may be redeemed. To this end von Trotta constructed Arthur as someone who is both complicit with the regime and recognises its and his own failures, which he tries to rectify. The once carefree, cocaine snorting, aristocratic playboy we meet in the

⁵¹⁸ Clarke, 'German Martyrs', p.49.

1932 flashback is transformed into the wounded Wehrmacht officer whose abhorrence for the regime he has served has seemingly turned him into a moral authority on Jewish persecution, and which he consequently strives to mitigate. The viewer recognises that Arthur feels guilt for what he witnessed on the Eastern Front. His impotence in preventing these atrocities is translated into fevered activity in an attempt to at least save Fabian. Demonstrating an attitude more prevalent amongst the 68 generation, Arthur confronts his father and von Weiz, showing that Germans will be forced to confront the Holocaust. The viewer may also note that it is Arthur who remains with Ruth so that she can maintain her vigil for her mother long after the protest has ended. Both he and the viewer know that it is futile, but Arthur remains nevertheless.

Alongside atonement we also witness three different forms of sacrifice, demonstrated by Miriam Süßmann, the protesters and Klara Singer. In the first of these examples, Miriam ultimately makes a very Christian sacrifice, which is re-told as an act of defiance under the constrained circumstances of her imprisonment.⁵¹⁹ When Ruth locates her, rather than keep her daughter with her, Miriam finds the courage to send her away in spite of Ruth imploring her to let her stay, sending her to the protesters to keep her safe, even though it means saying goodbye to her daughter. When the SS become aware of Miriam's marital status, and of her daughter, she lies about Ruth's whereabouts, taking the SS officer's hostility upon herself so that it is deflected from her daughter, protecting her for as long as possible. Miriam becomes a martyr; she accepts her fate but dies so that Ruth may live, an action which expresses Miriam's hope of a better future, but one that is more Christian than Jewish.

In its trailer *Rosenstraße* is described as „eine Liebesgeschichte von Mut und Opferbereitschaft,” thus evoking notions of righteous heroism, and self-sacrifice.⁵²⁰ Von Trotta implies that the protesters were prepared to die for their spouses. In a scene towards the end of the film we see the protesters face the prospect of their own death as the SS assemble machine guns, directing them at the women and children. There follows a tense silence before the SS receive a new order, dismantle their weapons and

⁵¹⁹ Sally Winkle similarly picks up on this example and uses it to suggest the strength of female resistance operating within a patriarchal society. See her ‘Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, pp.449-450.

⁵²⁰ Bonus Material from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

exit the street. Confronted with their own mortality, von Trotta allows the protesters to show fear but to remain stoic and steadfast. None, we note, attempt to flee or beg for mercy, rather they accept their fate and are ultimately spared.⁵²¹ Conversely, however, Klara is allowed to sacrifice her own life, to become a martyr. In a final and futile act of defiance against the regime Klara commits suicide after Hans has been deported and it appears all her efforts to save him have been to no avail. Klara's death may also be a metaphor for the German-Jewish relationship, indicating that Germans and Jews truly belong together and cannot survive without each other.

vi) Sexual Sacrifice – Implications of the Goebbels scene

Whilst von Trotta invoked Christian iconography, positioning the protagonists as pure and good, admirable women who show the way forward to enlightenment, she simultaneously contradicted this message of the film by implying that in spite of the protesters' civic courage, an instance of sexual sacrifice ultimately saved the detainees. Whether von Trotta intended to imply that Lena offered herself in exchange for the detainees' release, as I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, remains disputed. Journalist Wolfgang Höbel asked in his review:

Ist es also nicht so sehr der Protest der Frauen auf dem Bürgersteig, sondern der angedeutete Sex-Opfergang der Märtyrerin Lena in Abendrobe, durch den die Häftlinge freikommen?⁵²²

Wolfgang Benz went on to declare that the implication of sexual sacrifice turned the film into historical kitsch that ridiculed and devalued the actual protest.⁵²³ Von Trotta vehemently denied this, discrediting the accusation in order to evade it.⁵²⁴ Yet, the inference is there in spite of von Trotta's claim to the contrary, and was certainly not helped by Lena's comment on arriving at the film premiere, that she felt as if she was selling herself, or by the fact that, as Sally Winkle noted, the relevant chapter is titled

⁵²¹ Where other accounts such as Jochheim's popular history recount this scene they show how it initially caused panic, with some women fleeing the street, and others caught up in the mayhem. Other witnesses however refute this, or raise doubts that this incident ever really occurred.

⁵²² Höbel, 'Opfergang in Abendrobe', p.146.

⁵²³ Benz, 'Kitsch, Klamotte, Klitterei', p.13.

⁵²⁴ Audio Commentary from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment. In fact she states she had planned that Lena would flee from the premiere when she realised their efforts had failed, but it was Katja Riemann had argued that it would not have been in character.

“Lena’s Sacrifice” on the American DVD.⁵²⁵ Anna M. Parkinson dismisses the scene as superfluous and at odds with the film’s message about civic courage, and remarks that “if it is meant to be a reductive feminist comment on the base ambitions of men set over and against the honor and fidelity of the German woman, it instead ends up reducing the protest to a dangerous game of sexual weaponry and reproducing an already exhausted and reductive set of tropes about fascist masculinity.”⁵²⁶

Lena’s sexual sacrifice does indeed appear to be implied in the film. Moreover, as the original screenplays also make clear, there has always been an unspoken, but evident sexual sub-text to the Goebbels scene. We know from the first two screenplays how the scene was originally envisaged, and that it played out in a very similar manner with the key difference that the siblings’ ploy to enchant Goebbels succeeded. Von Trotta’s alteration to the scene is perhaps a concession to the subsequent developments in historical research, and the idea of a sexual sacrifice the resulting by-product of the ambiguity that she introduced. Either way, however, whether the ploy succeeds or fails it is predicated on a sexual power game in which the female body is used, to follow Parkinson’s analogy, as a weapon with which to manipulate the male in order to achieve a specific aim. Von Trotta points out that Goebbels’ reputation as the ‘Bock von Babelsberg’ was well known, which Lena and Arthur set out to exploit to their advantage. In each version of the screenplay, as in the film, she dresses alluringly and uses her beauty to attract his attention. This is a point von Trotta also makes in her audio commentary, perhaps in an attempt to downplay the criticisms that have been levelled at the scene.⁵²⁷ The idea may have always been to lure Goebbels, ostensibly by playing music as a means of charming him, but in so doing von Trotta always implied Lena should use her body, even if only to be gazed upon and fantasised about. Ergo she appeals to his sexual instincts, in spite of von Trotta’s claims to the contrary following Benz’s criticisms. In this way, von Trotta did trivialise the protest, simultaneously undermining the film’s central messages about civic courage and the importance of female solidarity.

⁵²⁵ Winkle, ‘“Feminist Re-Visions’ of a Historical Controversy’, p.450.

⁵²⁶ Parkinson, ‘The Emotional Politics of Margarethe von Trotta’s *Rosenstrasse*’, p.125.

⁵²⁷ Audio Commentary from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

vii) **Anti-Semitism, Philo-Semitism and National Identity in *Rosenstraße***

As we have seen throughout this chapter, von Trotta invited the viewer to reflect on the German-Jewish relationship from an affirmative perspective in which triumph ultimately overcomes tragedy and there is hope for a better tomorrow. Nazism is re-imagined as an aberration, one that has damaged the German-Jewish relationship but not destroyed it entirely. In *Rosenstraße* anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism are juxtaposed. This section explores the function of both in relation to the constructions of identity in the past, present and in the hopes for the future that we find in the film. Whilst von Trotta implied that anti-Semitism belonged to Germany's past, that it offered a counter-model of identity, she both downplayed the extent of historic German anti-Semitism and overplayed the extent of philo-Semitism. As we see, von Trotta invited the viewer to reflect on questions of identity, and in particular of the problematic nature of fixed identities. By showing German anti-Semitism, von Trotta implied that notions of national identity would always be flawed and vulnerable to exploitation. In the 1943 timeframe von Trotta associates German anti-Semitism with opposition to inter-faith marriage, to which the enlightened, philo-Semitic position of the intermarried protesters, and of Lena in particular, provide the contrast, and an ideal, promoting the idea of hybridity as superior to models of national identity.

The film becomes particularly problematic when von Trotta twins past hostility towards intermarriage, which she suggests had its basis in anti-Semitism, with Jewish opposition to intermarriage in the present day. At first glance this metaphorical doubling appears to suggest that Baron von Eschenbach, as the key opponent to intermarriage in the 1943 timeframe, and the adult Ruth as the opponent to intermarriage in the contemporary timeframe, are equally as prejudiced and unjustified as the other. This seemingly suggested Germans could be let off the hook because Jews also shared the same reservations. Upon further exploration, however, we are able to see the way in which this is bound up with von Trotta's exploration of identity, and specifically her privileging of hybridity as an ideal model. To understand it we need to be aware of the Baron and the origins of his objections and then juxtapose them with Ruth's. We note that Jewish objection to intermarriage only occurs in the contemporary timeframe. It is implied that prior to the end of the Third Reich, the only objections to intermarriage came from non-Jewish Germans.

If, as I have suggested, anti-Semitism enables von Trotta to suggest that fixed identities are problematic, then it follows that philo-Semitism becomes particularly important because it allowed von Trotta to suggest that there is a historical precedent for hybridity within Germany's past. Moreover, it is represented as the diametric opposite of this earlier anti-Semitism, as enlightened humanism that rejected Nazism. Here von Trotta evokes notions of the German-Jewish symbiosis, largely referring to the nineteenth century assimilationist model, as others such as popular historian Gernot Jochheim had done before her. As we have already seen this model suggests that Jews are first and foremost Germans, for whom religion is secondary. To a lesser extent von Trotta also alludes to the Weimar model, which is associated with cosmopolitanism and modernity. Again we see that the extent of the symbiosis is exaggerated. However, we also see that it is utilised to promote the idea of hybridity as an ideal, one that rejects the more problematic notions of German identity. Yet, when we consider the way in which notions of this hybrid identity have been constructed, we see that they contain aspects of various models of national identity. In *Rosenstraße* the viewer sees national identity in the guise of hybridity. Lastly, the hope for a better future based on this privileging of hybridity is promoted through the potent symbol of the child. This simultaneously underlines the desire for a less encumbered sense of identity.

Let us now examine this exploration of identity in more detail, turning our attention first to Baron von Eschenbach and then to Ruth. The Baron's function within the narrative is to provide what may loosely be termed a counter-identity, by which I mean he represents the opposite of characters like Lena; he is the antithesis of contemporary Germanness, embodying everything that the modern German should wish not to be. He is both reminder of the past, and a warning against the dangers of narrowly defined identity. The Baron is strongly nationalistic and conservative; his sense of self is defined by hardened binary divisions between himself and his perceived 'other'. His anti-Semitism, whilst buttressed by Nazism, has been shaped by his formative years, specifically the late 19th century racial rather than religious anti-Semitism that gained increased social acceptability following unification in 1871.⁵²⁸ We see this in the way he paraphrases Heinrich von Treitschke's 1879 phrase 'die Juden sind unser Unglück',

⁵²⁸ Carr, W., 1991. *A History of Germany 1815-1990*. 4th Edition, London: Arnold, p.166.

remarking to his wife that „Ihr [Lena’s] Unglück heißt immer noch Fabian Israel.“⁵²⁹ His firmly entrenched sense of self causes him to reject his own daughter, lest her openness to German-Jewish unity cause him to reconsider his own sense of self. The viewer understands his objections to intermarriage are based on old prejudices perpetuated by Nazism and the arrogant pride of the aristocracy. He provides a model of identity, which is to be rejected, one revealed to be tainted with prejudice. Even if his anti-Semitism is not of the murderous kind, von Trotta demonstrates that it still ultimately leads to the suffering of others. The viewer is invited to look down upon the Baron for his anti-Semitism, to reject his stance as outmoded and undesirable.

Yet, von Trotta suggests that by contrast, Ruth’s sudden objection to intermarriage – for we understand she once approved – can be comprehended, that sympathy rather than revulsion may be felt for her. The viewer realises from the outset that unlike the Baron, Ruth’s stance is founded on genuine fear, from her experience of National Socialism, which individuals such as the Baron, with their narrow-minded prejudices and arrogant pride, ultimately allowed to flourish. Ruth’s psychological trauma has given rise to a fear of the past repeating itself, which understandably she wishes to protect her own daughter from, but which manifests itself in the form of an outwardly hostile attitude towards the perceived threat. In *Rosenstraße* von Trotta implies that from a Jewish perspective intermarriage had been welcomed prior to the rise of Nazism – we note that Fabian’s parents are delighted with the non-Jewish daughter-in-law. The implication is that objections have only subsequently arisen and may be understood as a consequence of the Holocaust, which following the film’s logic tore Germans and Jews asunder. Yet, this sidesteps the fact that Jewish religious law has traditionally abhorred mixed marriages. To suggest Jewish objections stem solely from the Holocaust gives an inaccurate idea of the history and nature of opposition to intermarriage. Von Trotta’s inaccuracy here is bound up with the conception of identity she constructs. Focusing on Jewish objections to intermarriage prior to the Holocaust would likely have drawn attention to similarities between Nazi definitions of Germanness, which explicitly excluded the Jewish, and Zionist definitions of identity, which similarly excluded the non-Jew, in this case the German. Drawing attention to pre-existing problems within

⁵²⁹ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

the German-Jewish relationship, would have contradicted the idealised version of the relationship she sought to project.

Contrasting Ruth's and the Baron's objections to intermarriage also enabled von Trotta to draw attention to the limitations of an essentialist sense of identity – whether German or Jewish – arguing that it can no longer provide a sound model. It further suggests post-1945 Germans have been left in a kind of inertia, unable to move on from the past without their Jewish compatriots, and vice-versa. Von Trotta implies that it is in German-Jewish unity, in the assimilationist symbiosis, and in embracing the non-national that an ideal model of post-national identity, favouring hybridity, is to be found.

Von Trotta implies that this ideal, as I indicated above, has a historical precedent in German philo-Semitism in the form of the symbiosis. Whilst re-imagining relations between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans as a positive symbiosis has certainly been a central feature of heritage films since the 1990s, in which as Koepnick observes, “Jews regularly turn out to be the better Germans,” it is also a long-standing feature of the Rosenstraße protest's representation.⁵³⁰ We note, for example, the similarities between the film *Rosenstraße* and Gernot Jochheim's popular history, which, in 1990 also employed this model. This highlights, in accordance with my theoretical framework, the way the different media of memory blend into one another. In addition, it suggests that a desire for an identity based on a re-imagined German-Jewish symbiosis has been a feature of cultural representations for a longer time than either von Trotta's or indeed other heritage films suggest.⁵³¹

References to the symbiosis are present in a number of ways. Language is a determining factor that binds Jew and non-Jew. Like many German Jews, including refugees, Ruth defined being German on the basis of the language.⁵³² As Taberner puts

⁵³⁰ See Koepnick, 'Re-framing the Past', p.66. Other continuities also exist, for example Lena is very similar to Klara Grossmann in Gernot Jochheim's popular history, who was based on Hanna Löwenstein de Witt. Although we also note that von Trotta interviewed Hans-Oskar Löwenstein de Witt, so influence may also have come from him.

⁵³¹ Jochheim, *Protest in der Rosenstraße*, pp.26-28.

⁵³² Wilcock, E., 28 July 2004. 'FORUM: _Rosenstrasse_ solicited response'. *H-Net Multimedia Review H-German*. Available from: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=766>. [Accessed 29 July 2005].

it, when Hannah asks why Ruth always wanted her and her brother to speak German with her, the viewer can “feel the despondency of the German woman made to live amongst ‘strangers.’”⁵³³ The centrality of language to identity is further reinforced in Ruth’s response that the German language is the only thing that she has left of her mother.

We also see, in continuity with the earlier draft screenplays, Fabian and Nathan reflect on the subject of German-Jewish identity, with Nathan paraphrasing Victor Klemperer. As Taberner observed, reference to the 19th century assimilationist model is expressed in a re-constituted intellectual tradition with references to prominent Jews who considered themselves to be nationally minded, Klemperer included.⁵³⁴ Von Trotta cherry picks from Klemperer’s work, referring to the Nazis for example as ‘undeutsch’, so as to support the idea of the symbiosis.⁵³⁵ In a further reference to intellectual traditions, von Trotta also alludes to German literature, and to the Brothers Grimm in particular. The detainees use fairytale analogies as they ruminate on their fate. Nathan alludes to the Holocaust when he speculates on the fate that awaits them, remarking: „vielleicht stecken sie uns in den Ofen wie in Hänsel und Gretel?“⁵³⁶ Additionally, Klara’s suicide incorporates references to a fairytale. Von Trotta remarks that when Lena discovers Klara’s corpse she finds her laid out to look like Snow White.⁵³⁷ The viewer is invited to reflect on the idea of German-Jewish unity through intellectual tradition, and that the Jew was, as Koepnick has suggested, “the cultural glue that can bond Germans together.”⁵³⁸

Alongside this, von Trotta also reintegrates the 19th century model of cultural nationalism, albeit in a reconfigured form in which it presents itself as liberal multiculturalism. Again we see this is in keeping with broader cinematic trends in heritage filmmaking. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the model of cultural nationalism implied that the essence of the German nation could be found in its music;

⁵³³ Taberner, ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film’, p.366.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., p.360.

⁵³⁵ She fails to mention his assertion that anti-Semitism and Nazism were essentially German. See: Taberner, Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film, p.366.

⁵³⁶ Dialogue Transcript from *Rosenstraße* 2003. Film. Directed by Margarethe von Trotta. Germany: Concorde Home Entertainment.

⁵³⁷ Having overdosed on sleeping pills, Klara’s body was covered with dust and debris of the air raid the previous night, giving her an exaggeratedly white appearance.

⁵³⁸ Koepnick, ‘Re-framing the Past’, p.66.

moreover this definition excluded the Jew. Yet, Koepnick argues that in recent heritage film this model has been re-imagined so that Jews can be brought into the equation “because they triumph in what according to nineteenth-century ideologues was the most German of all the arts – music,” and it is “through the medium of music that Jews and non-Jews in recent German film connect most successfully.” Lena, the concert pianist, and Fabian the violinist are first united through music, that is the cultural glue that binds and defines them. In a metaphor for the damage wrought on the symbiosis, and perhaps in a comparison with Joseph Vilsmaier’s 1997 film *Comedian Harmonists*, as Lena and Fabian are on the brink of success, seemingly likely to embark on a European musical tour, National Socialism puts an end to their hopes and their respective careers. By re-imagining music as a site of unity, one that can transcend the national and the ethnic, and one that could arguably also be seen as intellectual, von Trotta endorses a model of identity that has its roots in a very specific form of German national identity. Ironically, it is one from which the German-Jew was historically excluded. However, this is not conveyed in the film lest it detract from the idea of a hybrid identity as superior to the national.

By prioritising and idealising the German-Jewish symbiosis, von Trotta was able to juxtapose narrowly defined national identity with a hybrid conception, so as to show that the national will always be susceptible to exploitation and extremism. Where this model could be said to have failed, in Ruth’s parents’ divorce, von Trotta suggests this resulted solely from the overwhelming pressure on the individual, rather than any fault with the actual concept of hybridity. In addition, whilst many Jews since the Second World War have taken the view that assimilation in fact offered no protection against resurgent anti-Semitism, von Trotta’s *Rosenstraße* insinuates that without the German, Jewish life will atrophy, and therefore needs to be saved.⁵³⁹ From both a Jewish and a non-Jewish perspective, following von Trotta’s logic in *Rosenstraße*, hybridity is the lesson to be learned from the Nazi past, and intermarriage is the cornerstone of this model.

With intermarriage as the basis for this model, the protesters function as its forebears. Yet, on closer inspection we see that characteristics and ideals in the German and

⁵³⁹ Taberner, ‘Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film’, p.367.

Christian traditions are the dominant features of this supposedly hybrid identity. The viewer is invited to identify with the protesters, with Lena, Klara, and Frau Goldberg in particular. They are first and foremost admirable German women, loyal and steadfast precisely because they are German women. These values constitute part of their identity. It is as a result of their *deutsche Treue* that they have withstood the pressure to divorce. In earlier drafts, for example, Lena argues with the SS officer that precisely because she is a German woman, she will remain with her husband.⁵⁴⁰ Even as role models of hybridity, it is thus the protesters' very German characteristic that is lauded. Furthermore, we could also argue that the image of the protesters is also not that far removed from that of the ideal German woman in accordance with Nazi, and certainly patriarchal ideology, which emphasised the importance of the home, the family, and loyalty over and above any kind of political engagement. The protesters' aim was simply to reclaim their husbands, their children. In attempting to rescue their spouses, the protesters thus reinforced their role as wife, as mother, as apolitical defender of family life.

We also find reference both to the concept of *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitutional patriotism) of the FRG, and to the values associated with the Berlin Republic in the image von Trotta creates of the protesters. *Verfassungspatriotismus* relates to the adoption of a post-national identity based in the constitutional principles of the *Grundgesetz*, prioritising principles of liberal democracy and equal rights, irrespective of origin. Ethnicity is of secondary importance. By virtue of their intermarriages the viewer can deduce that the protesters had already rejected a narrowly defined sense of identity based on the idea of ethnic belonging, of the type that had led Germans to National Socialism. That they also place value on equal rights, for example, is as I suggested earlier, voiced through Lena's anger at the many inequalities she and Fabian are forced to endure.

Lena's tolerance and openness are symbolic of her own attitudes, but also those of her fellow protesters. These are thrown into sharp relief when contrasted with the attitudes of the various Nazi brutes. The protesters' humanism, their tolerance is most noticeably depicted in the various scenes in which the uniformed Nazis use physical force against

⁵⁴⁰ von Trotta, *Rosenstraße* Draft Screenplay 1, p.33.

them, trying to hold them back in the street, and later when they threaten to shoot them. Von Trotta singles out Lena as the protester who most epitomises the modern, the cosmopolitan, and the anti-racist. This is reinforced in the flashback scene to the Weimar era. At the Metropol club, Lena and Arthur discuss the futility of their father's anti-Semitism whilst dancing to an Afro-American jazz band. In the same scene it is Lena who proposes to Fabian – or rather declares that they will marry, rather than waiting to receive a proposal, an action that marks her out as a strong, assertive figure. Her modernity and progressiveness thus jar with Nazism, its racism and its patriarchy. As Stuart Taberner has highlighted, references to Weimar modernity and cosmopolitanism also reflect the “commitment to openness and tolerance proclaimed by the former student radicals of ’68 who have shaped the Berlin Republic.”⁵⁴¹ Lena thus upholds and reinforces the very same values that are part of contemporary Germany's self-image.

Likewise, we note that the idea of civic courage is also held in high regard in contemporary Germany. Re-telling narratives of the civic courage of German women through an allegory to Christian teachings, albeit one that played down the religious in order to appeal to the secular audience (as discussed earlier in this chapter), allowed the protesters' values and Lena's in particular to be presented as universal, ones seemingly transcending the boundaries of the nation, whilst simultaneously, subtly incorporating national values.

In addition, we can also see that Lena places value on culture – and music specifically – as a source of identity, a common heritage that binds non-Jew and Jew. Her favoured choice of music – César Franck's Sonata in A minor for Violin and Piano – is significant, especially when we consider the composer and the major influences on his work. Born in 1822 in Liège, Belgium, at the time part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to a Belgian-German father and German mother, Franck spent his adult life in Paris. His background and his lifestyle may at first evoke a sense of Europeanism, of multiculturalism, albeit with distinct German origins; he seems to epitomise the liberal multiculturalism which Lena also does through her identification with music. Yet, his work, we note, was influenced by both the Hungarian composer

⁵⁴¹ Taberner, 'Philo-Semitism in Recent German Film', p.358.

Franz Liszt (himself of German ancestry) and more significantly Richard Wagner, who declared in 1878 that the “essence of German national identity could be located in music” and furthermore had aspired “to exclude the Jews from the nation’s story”.⁵⁴² Lena’s association with culture as identity, and her choice of music neatly illustrate the way liberal multiculturalism obscures and remodels the older notion of German cultural nationalism, and repackages it here as a positive feature of the idealised hybrid model of identity. In summary then the model of identity presents features associated with national identities of the past and present re-modelled in the guise of hybridity.

Much has already been discussed about the past-present relationship in *Rosenstraße*. Yet, it is nevertheless a film that, from the very beginning, looks to the future, even as it is looking back. We have seen how the trans-generational dialogue proved pivotal to the excavation of Ruth and Lena’s narratives. This final section explores how the concept of generations is again central, allowing hopes and aspirations to be projected through the ‘utopian potential of the child’. The motif of the child as a symbol of hope for the future has already featured in other von Trotta films, *Die bleierne Zeit*, for example.⁵⁴³ In *Rosenstraße* the hope for a better tomorrow is symbolised by Ruth’s granddaughter, Emily, who we see at both the beginning and end of the film, and to a lesser extent by her unborn sibling – a potent symbol of the future – at the start of the film. Up until now examinations of *Rosenstraße* have focused on Ruth, Hannah and Lena. Little attention has been paid to Ruth’s son Ben, and his family, as if to suggest they were of lesser relevance, providing little more than triggers for the female-centred, triadic exploration of family history and its intersections with the Nazi past. Yet, this is not the case, they are in fact significant characters, Emily most of all, who like her grandmother is also the daughter of intermarried parents.⁵⁴⁴

We are introduced to her at the same time as we first see Ruth. As the scene moves from the New York cityscape and into Ruth’s flat we see grandmother and granddaughter reflected in the mirror. Whilst Ruth lights the candle of remembrance,

⁵⁴² Koepnick, ‘Re-framing the Past’, p.67.

⁵⁴³ Homewood, *From Baader to Prada*, pp.142-148.

⁵⁴⁴ That Marian, Ben’s wife is not Jewish is never directly stated in the dialogue, but is alluded to when she enquires of Hannah what the Jewish mourning rituals that Ruth is insisting on consist of. Later, when Ruth and Ben exchange heated words over Luis, Ruth lowers her voice so that Marian cannot overhear when she states that as a non-Jew he has no place in the family, and if Hannah marries him she will no longer be her daughter.

Emily, seated at the table, quietly drawing, watches her grandmother's actions with curiosity. The fact that we see them as a reflection in a mirror is symbolic, indicating to the viewer that we will experience a process of looking back, and that it is the child who will act as the trigger for the adult's remembering. Yet at the same time, Emily symbolises the next generation, the future, so whilst we are looking back, we are also looking forward.

As the mourners gather in the flat, Emily joins her parents, sitting on the floor with her father, directly in Ruth's sightline.⁵⁴⁵ Lost in her own thoughts, Ruth catches sight of her granddaughter, who is staring in innocent wonderment at her. Suddenly and quite unexpectedly she sees her younger self in her granddaughter's image.⁵⁴⁶ In her mind's eye she is momentarily transported back to her own childhood and to her own mother, who turns to look at her. Ruth's shock at the sudden remembrance of her past shows in her face. Emily's reaction, by contrast, is a mixture of foreboding and curiosity. Somewhat fearful, Emily silently reaches out for her mother, Marian's hand, but remains transfixed, signifying a desire to move forward into the future whilst continuing to reflect, as if spellbound by the past. Emily in effect unwittingly provides a window to Ruth's past. Whether Emily ever learns about her grandmother's past remains unclear. It may be that through the silence between grandmother and granddaughter there is a complicit understanding that the past needs not be articulated so that the younger generation need not be burdened by it, although in the context of the film it seems more likely she would come to understand the importance of intermarriage in her family. By the end of the film we see Emily playing a further symbolic role, this time as Hannah's bridesmaid, carrying out traditional duties, welcoming the new member of the family. In the closing shot, as all guests clap and wish the new couple luck, Emily gazes again at Ruth, before turning her gaze forwards, towards Hannah and Luis, towards the future.

In *Rosenstraße* the utopian potential of the child is also expressed in Emily's silence and the act of gazing and reflecting. It represents an unspoken desire, namely that the

⁵⁴⁵ In this scene Ben mistakenly refers to Emily by her real name of Julia – the one and only time the viewer learns her name. It is an error that was not picked up during editing, however the end credits list her character name as Emily and her real name as Julia Eggert.

⁵⁴⁶ Physically Emily looks similar to the young Ruth at the same age, as we see in the brief flashback to 1943, and to Ruth hiding from the SS as they search the house.

burdens of the past may be overcome for the sake of future generations. In the closing scene, as Emily looks towards Hannah and Luis (and hence the future), she looks towards intermarriage, which von Trotta's film promotes as the ideal. It is through Emily, as the epitome of hybridity that the hope for a future identity unburdened and untainted, is expressed, and von Trotta implies, may ultimately be achieved.

3. Chapter Conclusions

Re-reading Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* has indicated how the film is more complex than it has necessarily been given credit for, and is at times also inherently contradictory and problematic. Yet, to dismiss it would also be overlook what it tells us about changing perceptions of the self and other from the mid-1990s to the turn of the new millennium. Although, as we have seen, even the original screenplays were problematic, we note that they contained more social criticism within them than we find in the actual film. This reflects the shifting patterns of memory discourses over the time period. Von Trotta's intended depiction of Nazi society, in which everyday anti-Semitism was the norm, would have been in line with broader trends in discourses of memory and identity. That that criticism was excised shows how *Rosenstraße* was influenced by and reflects the move away from a critical memory of everyday German complicity to one that seemingly rejects critical introspection, allowing non-Jewish Germans to be presented as victims in line with the shift in German cultural memory trends towards discourses of victimhood and suffering from the end of the 1990s and into the 2000s. It also reflects the shifts in German film from the critical style of the New German Cinema to the post-wall "cinema of consensus", which offers a less critical reading of the Nazi past, strangely transforming it into the site of comfort and orientation that Koepnick has identified.

Whilst broader trends in public memory and changes within the film industry have played a role in von Trotta's film, we can also see the influence of other media of memory on *Rosenstraße*, from Gernot Jochheim's popular history to developments in historical research, and of the film on public debate and understanding of the events. Von Trotta's filmic interpretation did not entirely refute the more critical interpretation of the protest that emerged in the historical discourses discussed in Chapter 2. After all, it introduced ambiguity around the cause of the detainees' release, where previously she

had allowed Arthur to be the principal cause of their survival. However, if the reviews and press interviews are anything to go by, she largely dismissed the developments in historical research, preferring instead the idea of the protest's success, which she also strongly defended against historians Benz and Gruner. She remained reluctant to adopt a critical memory of the protest.

Von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* thus contributed to discourses of remembering, but may also be understood as characteristic of the complex, politicised dynamics of historical memory. The dilemma of how to reconcile a critical remembrance of German guilt with the desire for a positive identity plays itself out in the film, particularly in its inherent contradictions. Whilst von Trotta prioritises the Holocaust, and places notions of Jewish suffering above the non-Jewish, she also obscures the extent of culpability for it. Whilst she promotes the idea of hybridity as an ideal model of identity, she re-integrates various models of identity – old and new – some of which originally explicitly excluded Jewish from the German.

At the same time, we may speculate that *Rosenstraße*, with all its contradictions and confused messages, reflects the competing and conflicting interests of von Trotta's generation. If we return to Paul Cooke and Marc Silberman's analogy of the split screen, which considers both how film is framed and what is obscured in or by it, we can see that von Trotta's film is at once a plea for a more positive sense of identity predicated on a more differentiated and empathetic understanding of the past, and a synecdoche which gives expression to the conflicts within the second generation, who are torn between their earlier criticisms of the first generation and a belated desire, post-unification, to empathise with them.

Chapter 6

The Rosenstraße as a Monument: A Complex Site of German-Jewish Memory

1.

The 70th anniversary of the Factory Action and Rosenstraße protest on 27th February 2013 was marked by a series of events. Alongside the Jewish Community's annual ceremonies of remembrance, a programme of activities was organised under the auspices of the Topography of Terror museum, as part of a citywide year-long programme of events marking the 80th anniversary the National Socialists' accession to power.⁵⁴⁷ Remembrance of the protest took several forms, including a public discussion, screening of Margarethe von Trotta's film *Rosenstraße* and launch of a new book by historian Wolf Gruner. For the first time it also engaged the public in commemoration via the platform of social media.⁵⁴⁸ The 70th anniversary indicates how integrated the Rosenstraße protest has become in Berlin's memorial culture. Although it has not been possible to include a detailed analysis of it in this thesis, indications for the future direction of research in this area are discussed in Chapter 7.

Since unification, Rosenstraße has been transformed, its significance shifting from a little used side street in East Berlin to an increasingly significant authentic site of memory in the capital city of reunified Germany. Even though the original building no longer exists, and Rosenstraße itself has been altered, it has become a symbolic location.

On-site memorialisation of the Rosenstraße protest first began in the GDR in 1988. It has since taken on multiple forms. These include: two temporary exhibitions, the first in 1992 and the second in 1993, to mark the 50th anniversary of the events; Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture 'The Women's Bloc' (*Block der Frauen*), installed in 1995; a commemorative plaque unveiled in 1998; and an open-air exhibition by the

⁵⁴⁷ Margolis, K., (q.margolis@gmail.com), 16 February 2013. *Rosenstrasse protest*. Email to (H.J.Potter@bath.ac.uk). See also: Schieb, B., 2013. *Zerstörte Vielfalt. Protest in der Rosenstraße*. Available from: <http://www.berlin.de/2013/partner/sonstiges/stiftung-topographie-des-terrors-mit-mehreren-veranstalten>. [Accessed 13 February 2013].

⁵⁴⁸ The Facebook page was established by Karen Margolis, a British Jewish poet and member of the planning committee, with the support of the Anne Frank Foundation. According to her email, from within the committee there was considerable reluctance to use social media, but the Anne Frank Foundation helped to champion it. She also stated that the 70th anniversary had attracted interest from abroad to a greater extent than in the past.

Topography of Terror, mounted on two identical advertising columns (*Litfaßsäulen*), which was completed in 1999.⁵⁴⁹ The events have been incorporated into the Topography's updated exhibition *Berlin 1933-1945: Zwischen Propaganda und Terror* at Niederkirchenerstraße, which re-opened in 2010. It has also featured as part of the *Juden in Berlin* exhibition (2000), it is mentioned in the exhibits at the New Synagogue on Oranienburgerstraße, as well as in the exhibition at the Otto Weidt Blindenwerkstatt at nearby Rosenthalerplatz.⁵⁵⁰ The fact that the protest has been represented in so many ways over a relatively short period of time underscores its contemporary significance.

Nonetheless, there has hitherto been little analysis of the protest's memorialisation as a whole. Jennifer A. Jordan has discussed the processes and challenges in the realisation of Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture and the importance of individual and citizens' initiatives, whilst I have examined both The Women's Bloc and the Topography of Terror's permanent on-site exhibition in an earlier article.⁵⁵¹

Given the varied ways in which the protest has been remembered, it is necessary to focus on specific aspects here, in order to provide an updated and extended analysis. In this chapter, I focus on the existing physical memorials, offering readings of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture, the commemorative plaque, the Topography of Terror's permanent on-site exhibition in Rosenstraße, and the new sections on the

⁵⁴⁹ This on-site exhibition originally included an online equivalent. It will not be considered in this analysis, however, as with the overhaul of the Topography of Terror, it was removed from their web page. The Topography's current website includes a reference to the exhibition in its section on Memorials and Remembrance Sites, describing the Rosenstraße Memorial in one sentence, stating that two poster pillars were erected in March 1999 to commemorate and document the historic events there.

⁵⁵⁰ The exhibition *Juden in Berlin* in 2000 included a section on the protest, which supported Wolf Gruner's interpretation. In the New Synagogue exhibition, viewed in 2010, Rosenstraße is marked out on a map of Jewish Life in the area around the New Synagogue. Both the site of the original house and Hunzinger's sculpture are mentioned in map reference 5. The entry reads: „Die 1995 geschaffene Skulpturengruppe von Ingeborg Hunzinger erinnert an den Protest nichtjüdischer Frauen gegen die Verhaftung ihrer Männer bei der Fabrik-Aktion am 27. Februar 1943.“ In the Otto Weidt exhibition, there is a plaque dedicated to Hans Israelowicz, a partial Jew and member of Otto Weidt's staff. It states that he was detained in Rosenstraße and his mother was amongst the protesters. Significantly, it also adds that almost all prisoners were released within four weeks, whereas previous accounts have tended to focus only on the weeklong period of the protest, neglecting to mention that some detainees remained for a number of weeks.

⁵⁵¹ Jordan, J.A., 2006. *Structures of Memory. Understanding Urban Change on Berlin and Beyond*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 111-120; Potter, H.J., 2010. 'Rosenstraße: A Complex Site of German-Jewish Memory'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.214-223.

Factory Action in the updated exhibition at Niederkirchenerstraße.⁵⁵² I ask how these memorials have been codified and how they may be interpreted. In addition, I consider the processes, struggles and memorial entrepreneurs (e.g. artists, historians, politicians, museums, citizens' initiatives) involved. Lastly, I examine the street itself. As Jennifer Jordan suggests, "patterns of remembering and forgetting emerge in the landscape of Berlin".⁵⁵³ The presence and even the absence of a memorial to a particular event can draw attention to the shortcomings and blind spots of collective memory as much as it can reveal the shape and priorities of remembrance. Drawing on Andreas Huyssen's notion of an urban palimpsest, a city-text, to be read as a narrative,⁵⁵⁴ I consider what the street, and the different layers of the past that are visible in it, tell us about contemporary Germany's relationship to its pasts, suggesting whilst its Jewish and Nazi pasts are prominent, the city's Prussian, pre and post-1871 pasts have also become important.

i) Why consider memorialisation?

As this chapter considers a variety of memorials, it is necessary to ask in what way memorialisation is understood, and how it relates to the other representations examined in this thesis. Moreover, why does this chapter only analyse the existing physical memorials? Following my theoretical framework, reading these different memorials allows me to see how patterns of remembering intersect in them and how they in turn contribute to the shape of what is remembered and how. As previous chapters have already highlighted, different cultural memories add to, mutually influence or may even contradict one another. When each memorial is placed in its broader context it is possible to see the influence of other representations within them but also how they in turn call into question certain assumptions about the events. Equally, memorials offer an insight into remembrance at a particular time, as, according to Andreas Huyssen, the "permanence promised by a monument in stone is always built on quicksand", whilst

⁵⁵² I do not provide an analysis of the entire updated exhibition at the Topography of Terror, focusing only on the section pertaining to the events in Rosenstraße, in order to speculate on future changes which the on-site exhibition may also eventually incorporate. All of the photographs used in this thesis were taken by me over a period between 2004 and 2010. Unless otherwise stated the photographs were taken in October 2010.

⁵⁵³ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.17.

⁵⁵⁴ Huyssen, A., 2003. *Present Pasts. Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.49.

Chloe Paver suggests this permanence lasts for approximately 15 - 20 years.⁵⁵⁵ Memorials and exhibitions may alter over time. They reflect the interpretation at the time of their production but may not reflect the most recent research; the Topography of Terror's Rosenstraße exhibition is a case in point.⁵⁵⁶

French cultural theorist Pierre Nora developed the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, or 'sites of memory', which he argued may articulate and contribute to memory at the level of the collective. However, Nora's conception encompasses a wide range of 'sites' of memory, from physical locations to objects and individuals. Consequently, I follow the approach adopted by Bill Niven and Chloe Paver, in which memorialisation is understood as a process, and focus on the physical memorials that are present in the land- and cityscape, in order to gain insight into what they indicate about understanding of the past.⁵⁵⁷ Their approach allows for an examination of multiple types of memorial, which is appropriate to this chapter. I also adopt ideas from Jennifer Jordan's work, in which she argues that memorials and the numerous memorial entrepreneurs involved in the realisation "craft landscapes, conjure up selected elements of the past, and plot courses for the future".⁵⁵⁸

Although this chapter refers briefly to the two temporary exhibitions in Rosenstraße at the beginning of the 1990s in order to provide background contextualisation, it does not offer an analysis of the temporary exhibitions, as they no longer exist and cannot provide physical markers of memory in the cityscape.⁵⁵⁹ Likewise, this chapter offers no analysis of virtual sites of memory; although the Topography of Terror previously

⁵⁵⁵ Huyssen, A., 1995. *Twilight Memories. Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. London and New York; Routledge, p.250; Paver, C., 'From Monuments to Installations: Aspects of Memorialization in Historical Exhibitions about the National Socialist Era.' In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.253-264, here p.262.

⁵⁵⁶ Given that the Topography of Terror's Documentation Centre renovation and update is now complete, it is entirely plausible that it will turn its attention to, revise and update its other permanent on-site exhibitions, including Rosenstraße. At the time of writing in June 2013 there are no specific plans.

⁵⁵⁷ Niven and Paver, *Memorialisation in Germany since 1945*, p.6.

⁵⁵⁸ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, pp.194-195. Jordan uses the term 'memorial entrepreneur' as an umbrella term to denote the many people involved in memorialisation from survivors, artists, historians, interested parties and groups, tour guides through to the bureaucrats and politicians who become involved in each memorial process (p.11).

⁵⁵⁹ Whilst they no longer exist in their physical form, some of the content is still available on the Internet. It has in the intervening years been supplemented by additional material.

hosted a virtual version of on-site exhibition in Rosenstraße, this was simply a replica of the exhibition.⁵⁶⁰

In this chapter I make use of the broad and inclusive term ‘memorial’ to denote a varied array of memory markers. In a sense, the diversity of the memorials reflects the increasing blurring of the boundaries that Niven and Paver have identified.⁵⁶¹ The protest in Rosenstraße is represented via the medium of sculpture, but also the memorial plaque, an open-air exhibition that arguably is more of a hybrid form made up of exhibition, memorial and replica artefact,⁵⁶² and finally a section of a multi-media, inter-active exhibition.⁵⁶³

Although these memorials reflect both the diversity of remembrance and the blurring of the boundaries between different forms, there are also implicit assumptions we should be aware of. The installation of The Women’s Bloc, for example, led to citizens’ groups lobbying for an additional memorial that would explain the significance of the sculpture. Similarly, historian Omer Bartov remarked on the obscurity of the memorial, pointing out that “this new installation carries no explanatory plaque”, suggesting that some sort of accompanying description would benefit the visitor.⁵⁶⁴ This presupposes, however, that the sculpture should have an explanatory plaque, which in effect not only explains what it represents, but effectively suggests what the visitor should think, rather than encouraging him or her to think for themselves and engage with the memorial. The implicit assumption is that in this context art is in need of explanation, suggesting that there is one definitive meaning to be found. My analysis questions the assumption that an additional explanation is either necessary or beneficial, and suggests a rich plurality of meanings can be discerned in The Women’s Bloc. The aforementioned assumption, however, reveals the concerns that were bound up with the protest’s memorialisation at that time, namely the need to convey clear messages about the protest’s significance, and about Jewish suffering, which certain memorial entrepreneurs clearly felt may be

⁵⁶⁰ Since the Topography of Terror underwent redevelopment, the online version has been dropped from the website.

⁵⁶¹ Op.Cit., p.7.

⁵⁶² See: Paver, ‘From Monuments to Installations’, pp.253-264.

⁵⁶³ The Topography of Terror’s exhibition includes pull-out sections, on which individual testimonies can be read along with audio-recordings of interviews with the eyewitnesses whose testimony forms part of the exhibition.

⁵⁶⁴ Bartov, O., 1998. ‘Defining Enemies, Making Victims: Germans, Jews and the Holocaust’. *The American Historical Review*, 103:3, pp.771-816, here p.797.

lost to the participant. Jennifer Jordan suggests that the specific context of the sculpture and exhibition is not automatically apparent, ergo without explanation the passerby may simply assume the sculpture is just a public art and that the exhibition holds the type of adverts usually found on advertising columns (Litfaßsäulen).⁵⁶⁵



Figure 1 The central sections of Ingeborg Hunzinger's *The Women's Bloc* (*Block der Frauen*, August 2006)



Figure 2 One of the two advertising columns – visible between the parked cars – used to display the Topography of Terror's exhibition in Rosenstraße. Both columns bear exactly the same photographs and texts. To the bottom left, under the street sign, is the memorial plaque, affixed to the exterior column of Rosenstraße 2-4

⁵⁶⁵ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, pp.119-120.

ii) Function of Memorials in Collective Memory Construction

The memorialisation process requires the input of a vast array of people, and the subject must resonate sufficiently with the broader public for any given memorial project to come into being.⁵⁶⁶ Yet, the question remains as to whether memorials serve any particular function, or if they actually enable us to forget rather than enjoin us to remember. We might argue that since 1945 the nature of memorialisation in Germany has changed, emphasising less past heroic deeds. Yet, we should ask whether, even where memorialisation has drawn attention to the crimes and suffering inflicted between the years 1933 – 1945, it engenders critical introspection, or if memorials become relatively invisible to the passer-by. Paul Cooke and Marc Silberman raise the question of whether the assumption of responsibility by memorial institutions and by the state in effect relieves the individual of the burden of personally recognising and dealing with guilt.⁵⁶⁷ Alternatively, we could argue that memorials, and specifically those dedicated to the events in Rosenstraße, actually encourage the individual to engage with and confront the past. This chapter, drawing on the theories of James E Young, suggests the latter. As Michael Imort argues memorials “instruct us what, how and when to remember,” and are “unique objects whose signification is created by a combination of historically connotative location and distinctive symbolic design.”⁵⁶⁸

James Young points out that any memorial is dependent on the will of the people to remember.⁵⁶⁹ This holds for the process of realising a memorial, from its original inception through to its installation, and for engagement with it. Any memorial, Young argues, “may invite the reader to remember events they never experienced directly”,⁵⁷⁰ but it is necessary to consider “what kind of understanding it evokes, and to what social ends”; and any site of memory recalls the past “according to a variety of national

⁵⁶⁶ Public resonance is the second of four factors that Jordan identifies as being necessary for the process of memorialisation – the first being memorial entrepreneurs to bring attention to the project, whilst the third and fourth are land use and land ownership. See her *Structures of Memory*, pp.11-13.

⁵⁶⁷ Cooke and Silberman, *Screening War*, p.7.

⁵⁶⁸ Imort, M., 2010. ‘Stumbling Blocks: A Decentralized Memorial to Holocaust Victims’. In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.233-242, here p.233.

⁵⁶⁹ Young, J.E., 1994. *The Art of Memory. Holocaust Memorials in History*. Munich and New York; Yale University Press, p.23.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.19.

myths, ideas and political needs [which] reflect both the past experiences and current political lives of their communities, as well as the state's memory of itself.”⁵⁷¹

The question remains, however, as to how memorials enable the individual to engage with the past, or indeed whether they actually provoke a response in the individual participant, which Young indicated was a necessity in the memorialisation process. The Rosenstraße memorials are very much a part of the urban landscape, permeating the everyday, confronting people with the Nazi past as they go about their day to day lives, making it visible rather than simply letting it disappear from view, overtaken by urban change. The passer-by does not have to seek out these memorials especially; they just come across them as they pass through or even by the street.⁵⁷² The key point here is choice. The passer-by can opt to engage with or ignore them. Yet the passer-by cannot avoid being aware of their presence. Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture, as my analysis will show, clearly evokes Jewish suffering, whilst the Topography's exhibition columns are immediately differentiated from the contemporary advertising columns, by both their different physical appearance and their striking colouring, which visually evokes the Nazi flag with its use of deep red, white and black. The viewer is not obliged to contemplate the memorials, and yet they do have to choose whether or not to engage with them.

iii) Continuities and Trends in Memorialisation: From Divided to Unified Germany

The majority of the Rosenstraße memorial projects were completed in the 1990s. Examples of other projects in the same decade include the long-standing debate around the central Holocaust memorial, which was finally opened in 2005, as well as the debates engendered around the *Neue Wache* (New Guardhouse) and the installation of Käthe Kollwitz's *Pietà* (1993), the bust of Sophie Scholl in the Wallhalla (2001), as well as the *Stolpersteine* (Stumbling Stones) project, to name but a few.⁵⁷³ It is

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., pp.19-20.

⁵⁷² Although Hunzinger's sculpture is set slightly back from the street, this argument still holds. Rosenstraße is a very narrow street making it difficult not to see the memorial, even in the passer-by's periferal vision.

⁵⁷³ For a more in depth discussion of the Holocaust memorial, see amongst others Young, J.E., 1994. *The Art of Memory. Holocaust Memorials in History*. Munich & New York; Prestl; for the sculpture of Sophie Scholl see Rickard, K., 2010 'Memorializing the White Rose Resistance Group in Post-War

important to note that the Rosenstraße protest's memorialisation did not occur in a vacuum, nor is it solely a consequence of unification. In a similarity with the Holocaust memorial, plans to memorialise the protest first emerged in the late 1980s, initiated by an individual rather than any state attempt to address its absence.⁵⁷⁴ Yet, unlike the Holocaust memorial, this impetus originated in the GDR. Hence before we analyse each of the memorials in detail, this section examines how trends in East, West and unified Germany have framed and enabled memorialisation of the Rosenstraße protest.

It is well documented that memorialisation in the GDR focused on the state's anti-fascist legacy, yet it is comparatively less noted that from the late 1970s onwards, Jewish suffering and the Holocaust began to move into the frame and by the late 1980s had become "a noticeable feature of the official GDR agenda of commemoration."⁵⁷⁵ This is not to say it had been entirely absent in previous decades or that the focus on it was without an agenda. In a parallel with the Federal Republic, the 40th and 50th anniversaries of the November Pogrom in 1978 and 1988 were commemorated in East Germany.⁵⁷⁶ The 750th anniversary of the City of Berlin in 1987 also provided a key date around which both East and West vied to outdo the other in their commemorations in a battle of Cold War one-upmanship. In 1988 the East Berlin magistracy launched a competition for a memorial for the Mitte district. Entitled "Competition for a Monument Complex to Honour the Effects of Jewish Citizens in Berlin, to Remember their Persecution and to Honour the Resistance", it had, by mid-1989 alone, generated 126 applications.⁵⁷⁷

The shift towards a commemorative focus on Jewish suffering was, at the state level, a calculated one. According to Mario Kessler, it can be attributed to "more general

Germany'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver eds, *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*, pp.157-167; on the Stolpersteine Project see: Michael Imort, 2010. 'Stumbling Blocks: A Decentralized Memorial to Holocaust Victims' In B. Niven and C. Paver eds, *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*, pp.233-242.

⁵⁷⁴ Andreas Huyssen refers to the voids of Berlin to describe the absence of certain memories from the commemorative cityscape. He suggested Berlin was marked as much, if not more, by absences as by the visible presence of its past. See his: 'The Voids of Berlin.' *Critical Inquiry*, 24, pp.57-81, here p. 60.

⁵⁷⁵ Niven, B., 2010. 'Remembering Nazi Anti-Semitism in the GDR.' In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.205-213, here p.206.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid. Other examples of commemoration include Will Lammert's memorial sculpture *Figurengruppen* at Große Hamburger Straße (1985) and the accompanying memorial stone (1987); on a larger scale the reconstruction of the *Neue Synagoge* at Oranienburgerstraße began in 1988, again to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the November Pogrom.

⁵⁷⁷ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, pp.106-107. It was eventually won by Karl Biedermann and Eva Butzmann, although it took until 1996 for it to be installed at Koppenplatz.

overtures towards the United States, increased prestige in the eyes of West German public opinion, and new freedoms resulting from changing Soviet policies.”⁵⁷⁸ Daniela Berghahn suggests that the SED regime was “trying hard to develop a closer relationship with the Jews since Erich Honecker was hoping to receive an invitation to the United States and realised that the Jewish influence on politics there was stronger than at home, where the membership of the Jewish Community was down to just three hundred in the late 1980s.”⁵⁷⁹ Whilst the reasons for the state’s focus on commemorating Jewish suffering were predicated on the state’s contemporary political aims, the shift undoubtedly facilitated remembrance of the protest.

West Germany, by contrast, did not memorialise the Rosenstraße protest. Its patterns of memorialisation, and in particular the emphasis it placed on grassroots and citizens’ initiatives, were to be essential in facilitating memorialisation of the protest in the longer term. Civil society and activism have long played a role in West German memorialisation, and by the late 1970s became increasingly significant, particularly as a result of generational change, which in turn engendered a different approach to remembering the past, with younger generations calling for a new type of memorial that facilitated a confrontation with National Socialist history.⁵⁸⁰ Grassroots history and civilian activism were especially prominent in the 1980s, partly, at least, as a response to the Kohl government’s agenda. Till suggests that “activists wanted to challenge neoconservative attempts at normalizing the German nation”.⁵⁸¹ In this period that key memorial institutions and citizens’ initiatives, including the Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand, which was to be involved in the protest’s memorialisation after 1990, were established. Similarly, the Topography of Terror Museum has its origins in this period. Situated on the site of the former Gestapo Headquarters and Reich Main Security Office, it had been a matter of public interest since the 1970s. Permission was given for a temporary exhibition, under the title Topography of Terror, to mark Berlin’s 750th anniversary in 1987. This entailed exposing the remains of the buildings and documenting their function. It proved so successful that it was extended

⁵⁷⁸ Kessler, ‘Anti-Semitism in East Germany’, p.151.

⁵⁷⁹ Berghahn, D., 2010. ‘Resistance of the Heart: Female Suffering and Victimhood in DEFA’s Antifascist Films’. In: P. Cooke and M. Silberman, eds. *Screening War: Perspectives on German Suffering*. Camden House: Rochester and New York, pp.165-186, here p.174.

⁵⁸⁰ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.34; Till, K.E., 2005. *The New Berlin. Memory, Politics, Place*. University of Minnesota Press; Minneapolis and London, pp.81-2.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp.128-129.

for a further year and eventually allowed to remain indefinitely. In 1992 the Topography of Terror was officially founded.

Whilst the post-unification era is notable for its rapid development in memorialisation, it was also characterised by continuities with the preceding decade, in that the citizens' initiatives' continued to play an important role, both in "triggering memorial efforts" and in "influencing terms of the debate".⁵⁸² Where the protest is concerned they have played a central role, from lobbying on behalf of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial project, to encouraging the Topography of Terror to create an open-air exhibition in the street. Citizens' initiatives also found their expression in the temporary exhibitions in Rosenstraße in 1992 and 1993. In the early 1990s a myriad of projects examining Berlin's Jewish past were undertaken.⁵⁸³ These included the temporary exhibition on Rosenstraße created by a group of students from Berlin's Fachhochschule für Sozialwesen and led by Gerhard Schumm. The group, inspired by Nathan Stoltzfus's 1989 *Die Zeit* article, 'Jemand war für mich da', began searching for their own eyewitnesses, and found references to the protest including Georg Zivier's 1945 article; their research also unearthed Abraham Pisarek's photograph of the Jewish Community Building on Rosenstraße that has since become synonymous with the protest. According to Jochheim, they found the idea of the advertising column a suitable means of displaying their findings.⁵⁸⁴ To coincide with the protest's 49th anniversary in 1992, the temporary exhibition was placed in Rosenstraße for one week, and it was again utilised the following year to mark the 50th anniversary. In addition the group organised a public discussion involving eyewitnesses, which approximately 100 people attended.⁵⁸⁵

Although the exhibition was only on display for a relatively limited period of time, its longer-term impact has been considerable. Its form has been adopted for the permanent on-site exhibition, and more significantly its popularity provided citizens' initiatives

⁵⁸² Wüstenberg, J., 2006. 'Berlin's Changing Memory Landscape'. *German Politics and Society*, 79: 24:2, pp.82-88, here p.87.

⁵⁸³ Remmler, 'Encounters Across the Void', p.23.

⁵⁸⁴ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.85.

⁵⁸⁵ Lünenborg, M., 1992. 'Ein Stück vergessene Widerstandsgeschichte. Der „Aufstand der Frauen“ an der Berliner Rosenstraße im Februar 1943'. *Freitag: Die Ost-West Wochenzeitung* 28 February; Seeliger, A., 1992. "Aufstand der Frauen besiegte Gestapo. Vor 49 Jahren verhinderten Berliner Frauen durch eine öffentliche Protestaktion die Deportation ihrer jüdischen Ehemänner" *taz*. 2 March, p.14; Schröder, *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen*, pp.86-87; Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, pp.85-86.

with the necessary leverage when later lobbying for the installation of Hunzinger's sculpture, enabling memorial entrepreneurs to argue that the protest resonated with the public and was therefore worthy of remembrance. The temporary exhibition thus drew public attention to the protest, and paved the way for the permanent memorials, on which this chapter now focuses, beginning with The Women's Bloc.

iv) **Background to Ingeborg Hunzinger's Memorial Project**

Given the shift in memorialisation in East Germany in the 1980s, it is unsurprising that the Office for Architecture-Related Art (*Büro für architekturbezogene Kunst*) and the Ministry of Culture were particularly receptive to Hunzinger's proposed memorial, especially when we consider that the East German Jewish Community had deemed the protest worthy of support.⁵⁸⁶ Although the Rosenstraße project stemmed from a citizens' initiative it was eventually well supported at an institutional and at state level. If Hunzinger had required tenacity and persistence to obtain funding for her memorial project – she had first suggested the idea of a memorial sculpture in 1988 but only gained funding the following summer in 1989 – she required it all the more following the collapse of the GDR. Yet, even though it was beset with a number of difficulties, from financing through to issues of land usage and landownership, Hunzinger's project made the transition from state sponsored GDR memorial to one that became integrated into unified Germany's memorial landscape. Moreover it was completed as it had originally been envisioned.⁵⁸⁷ Before I focus on The Women's Bloc itself, the following sections examine Hunzinger's background and motivation for creating the memorial, which are important for understanding the sculpture, and the aforementioned memorial struggle.

⁵⁸⁶ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.113. Dieter Klein, the director of the Office for Architecture Related Art made the Jewish Community's support for Hunzinger's proposed memorial clear in his letter to the Ministry of Culture when recommending the project for funding.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., p.115.

v) Ingeborg Hunzinger: Artist and Memorial Entrepreneur

Berlin artist Ingeborg Hunzinger-Riehl, née Franck (1915-2009), was one of three children born into a notable aristocratic family.⁵⁸⁸ A committed Communist from the age of 17, she faced difficulties during the Third Reich because of her political beliefs, and these were compounded by the fact that she and her siblings were deemed by the regime to be partial Jews in the second degree on the basis of their parents' inter-faith marriage; their mother was Jewish.⁵⁸⁹ (It was on the grounds of her Communist affiliation rather than her partial Jewish status that she was forced out of the Arts Academy in Charlottenburg in 1936, resulting in a move to Franken to complete her studies.⁵⁹⁰) Shortly before the outbreak of war, Hunzinger fled to Italy, ostensibly in search of work, heading first to Florence and later to Sicily with her partner Helmut Ruhmer, fellow artist and father of her eldest two children, who was killed in the final weeks of the war.⁵⁹¹ They returned to Berlin in 1942. However, Hunzinger was unable to enter the family home – her father fearing her presence (with her well-known Communist affiliation) would particularly endanger her Jewish mother, whom he was trying to protect.

After the war, Hunzinger moved to Baden, where she helped to found the Communist Party in Konstanz, and met her husband, Adolf Hunzinger. Problems in finding sufficient work continued, however, compounded by her Communist, Jewish and her Prussian heritage. Consequently, aided by her father, now an influential member of the Communist Party himself, the family moved to East Berlin, with Hunzinger securing a position at the art college in Weissensee. Between 1952 and 1953 she resumed her studies under the tutelage of Fritz Cremer (1906-1993) and Gustav Seitz (1906-1969) at

⁵⁸⁸ Her father was a respected chemist Professor Hans-Heinrich Franck and her grandfather, the painter Philipp Franck.

⁵⁸⁹ Her brother Peter fled Germany having spent some time imprisoned in a concentration camp because of his Communist associations. The fact that he was released at all, according to Albert Hirschmann, one of his contemporaries, resulted from his father's influence. See Hirschmann, A.O., 1995. *Propensity to Self-Subversion*. Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, pp.106-107.

⁵⁹⁰ Upon returning to Berlin she worked with prominent artists including Ludwig Kasper (1883-1945), his wife Otilie Kasper (1905 -), Hermann Blumenthal (1905-1942) and Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945).

⁵⁹¹ They were legally prohibited from marrying because of her mixed Jewish-Christian heritage. In 1933 the Nazi regime introducing a law criminalizing any new mixed Christian-Jewish marriages, and as is well documented considered but did not implement any law which would have made pre-existing intermarriages illegal as well.

the Academy of Art and worked as a freelance sculptor.⁵⁹² She divorced her husband in 1969, and married fellow sculptor Robert Riehl (1924-1976).⁵⁹³ Ingeborg Hunzinger died in July 2009 at the age of 94. She had continued to work up until shortly before her death, and her last piece was a bust of Rosa Luxembourg. Over eighty of her sculptures can be found throughout Germany and Italy.

Hunzinger remained committed to the political Left throughout her life.⁵⁹⁴ Her move to East Berlin had been predicated on the hope of participating in the construction of an ideal socialist society. Although she remained loyal to the state, she was also critical of it. According to Albert Hirschmann she became disenchanted with the GDR around the same time as her divorce in 1969, although it may have also been a consequence of a broader disillusion with the state after its role in suppressing the Prague Spring.⁵⁹⁵ The state, however, granted her relative freedom in her work, even though she was associated with dissident figures including Robert Havemann, and Wolf Biermann. Hunzinger stated that she perceived her Jewish identity as a matter of lesser importance. Nonetheless, as a recognised Victim of Nazism, she was granted the right to travel freely between East and West.⁵⁹⁶ In fact her decision to join the Jewish Community officially seems to have been politically motivated around the events of 1968 and the Prague Spring, in which she claims to have been involved, acting as a courier; it was also motivated by the desire to help her youngest daughter leave the GDR, which she did, illegally in 1971.⁵⁹⁷ Yet, Hunzinger's Jewish heritage and her association with the Jewish Community also afforded her the opportunity of expressing criticism of the state. According to Edith Becker, she bemoaned the lack of a memorial dedicated to Berlin's Jewish citizens.⁵⁹⁸ Hunzinger explained:

⁵⁹² Amongst Fritz Cremer's most notable works, certainly in relation to the Nazi past and the Holocaust, are his monuments at Buchenwald, Mauthausen and Ravensbrück concentration camps, and his monument to the Spanish fighters in Berlin. Gustav Seitz's work included a memorial at Berlin Weissensee.

⁵⁹³ Hunzinger, I., 2003. 'Marx & Michelangelo'. In: U.Eckhardt and A.Nachama, eds. *Jüdische Berliner. Leben nach der Schoa*. Berlin; Jaron, pp. 97-112.

⁵⁹⁴ After reunification, Hunzinger joined the PDS, the Party of Democratic Socialism.

⁵⁹⁵ Hirschmann, *Propensity to Self-Subversion*, p.108.

⁵⁹⁶ Hunzinger, 'Marx & Michelangelo', p.109.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.108. All three of her children fled to the West. She herself was interrogated and received a six-year work ban.

⁵⁹⁸ Becker, E., 2005. 'Auf den Lebensspuren der Bildhauerin Ingeborg Hunzinger'. *Erkneraner* 11, p.10. Available from: http://www.erkneraner.de/archiv/11-2005/Erkneraner_2005-11-S10.pdf [Accessed 8 April 2008].

Mir fiel beim Gang durch Berlin immer auf, dass es zum Gedenken an die von den Nazis verfolgten und ermordeten Juden keine künstlerisch gestalteten Mahnmale gibt [...] Also bin ich zu Dietmar Keller ins Ministerium [für Kultur in der DDR] gegangen, habe ihm gesagt: „Hier gibt es überhaupt nichts zum Gedenken an die Juden, und hier ist doch so viel passiert.“ Er gab mir sofort freie Hand, sagte seine Unterstützung zu.⁵⁹⁹

Her subsequent decision to focus on the Rosenstraße protest was prompted by Kostia Müntz, family friend and employee of the Centrum Judaicum. It is unclear how much Hunzinger knew about the protest prior to this meeting. Certainly neither she nor her mother were detained during the Factory Action; her parents' marriage was deemed privileged, and her mother was further protected through her father's status as a chemist in essential war work.⁶⁰⁰ The fear of deportation remained nevertheless and after Rosenstraße, her mother hid in order to survive.⁶⁰¹ Whether the events in Rosenstraße directly affected her family, or she merely attached significance to them retrospectively, intermarriage and survival were clearly motivating factors in her decision to focus on the protest.

vi) Memorial Struggles and Competing Agendas

Even though Ingeborg Hunzinger secured funding for her memorial project, its installation was not guaranteed following unification. When we think of memorialisation, we may consider that the reason whether a memorial is or is not erected to commemorate a particular event or individual is a matter of whether the subject resonates with the wider public, there is a willingness to evoke certain memories. To an extent it is so. However, enthusiasm and even financing are not sufficient factors alone. As the struggle behind the installation of The Women's Bloc illustrates, issues of land ownership, land usage and Green politics intersect with remembrance and memory construction and have a significant impact on the shape of public memory projects.

⁵⁹⁹ Op. Cit., p.109.

⁶⁰⁰ Of the detainees in Rosenstraße, the vast majority, although not all, were in so-called non-privileged intermarriages. They were also mostly forced labourers in the armaments industry. The majority, approximately 3/4 of Berlin's intermarried Jews, and especially those whose status was privileged, were not arrested during the Factory Action.

⁶⁰¹ Hunzinger, 'Marx & Michelangelo', p.106.

The original plan had been to install the memorial on the vacant lot in Rosenstraße, where Berlin's oldest synagogue had been located.⁶⁰² However, the project was beset with problems after the collapse of the GDR. That is not to say the project was without supporters. The temporary exhibitions of 1992 and 1993 aroused public interest and boosted support for Hunzinger's project. Likewise popular historian Gernot Jochheim used the second edition of his popular history in 1993 as a platform through which to bring Hunzinger's memorial to a wider audience, raising awareness of the struggle over its installation. In fact sufficient support was not an issue, as the cross party political support of both the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Democratic Socialists (PDS), and the declaration by the Berlin-Mitte district council that the memorial would be of citywide interest, amply illustrate.⁶⁰³ The stumbling block, it appears, was the politically sensitive issue of land ownership of the proposed memorial site, and its permissible usage.

Although the site had previously belonged to the Jewish Community, by the early 1990s there were questions of ownership, and also of what the site could be used for in accordance with city building laws.⁶⁰⁴ The Jewish Claims Conference placed a restitution claim on the site. A debate ensued between the Jewish Claims Conference, the memorial entrepreneurs and the city and district councils, which inevitably delayed the project. The Jewish Community intended to use the site for its own construction purposes, although for what is unclear. There was some suggestion they intended to rebuild the synagogue, but Brian Ladd suggests they intended to build an old people's home into which the sculptures would be integrated.⁶⁰⁵ However, this was against Hunzinger's wishes.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰² The synagogue, which was consecrated in 1714, was forced to close in 1942. It suffered bomb damage during the war, and although this was not irreparable, it was eventually razed to the ground in 1968, at the same time as the ruins of the Jewish Community Building, ostensibly to allow for construction in the surrounding area (shops and blocks of flats).

⁶⁰³ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, pp.114-115.

⁶⁰⁴ In April 1943 the building was expropriated by the Reichspost for the Charlottenburg district, making it property of the state. In the GDR the land was unused, even after the remnants of the building were demolished.

⁶⁰⁵ Ladd, B., 2004. *A Companion Guide to Berlin*. Woodbridge and Rochester, New York: Boydell and Brewer, here p.59.

⁶⁰⁶ Op. Cit., p.116.

Two key issues were raised in support of the memorial project. The Green Party urged the then Building Minister Wolfgang Nagel to reach an agreement with the Jewish Claims Conference, whilst the district council for Berlin Mitte emphasised both the historical significance of the site and the fact that lot was one of the few open green spaces within a densely populated and heavily built up part of the city. The PDS similarly argued in favour of the memorial on the grounds of the site's historical significance (namely as a site of resistance as opposed to a site of Jewish trauma) as well as the importance of retaining green spaces within the district.⁶⁰⁷

For all the argument around the site's historical significance, the issue over land ownership was resolved with recourse to the city building codes and what was permissible in accordance with existing building laws. Given that the surrounding area was already densely built up, with a number of commercial and residential buildings surrounding the lot, the vacant lot was designated unbuildable. Not only would any new building have removed the green space within the city, it would also have restricted natural light to the lower floor residences in the nearby tower block. Ownership of the land was transferred to the district housing authority, and the site was awarded the status of public green space with a monument, meaning that the memorial's installation could proceed.⁶⁰⁸ The Women's Bloc was dedicated on 18th October 1995, and the site is now under a preservation order.⁶⁰⁹

Thus, whilst the willingness to recognise the protest in Rosenstraße did exist – albeit perhaps for differing reasons – neither the historical significance of the events there, nor the efforts of memorial entrepreneurs alone were sufficient factors in securing the memorial space. What shape collective memories take is determined by more than mere willingness to remember or the relevance of certain past events for the present day. Collective memory at the memorial level is affected by that which is most politically expedient at the time. Had it not been for the issue of green space, and the city building regulations, Hunzinger's memorial might not have been installed. With Hunzinger's

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., p.116.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., p.117. The memorial sculpture itself had been completed in the previous August so its dedication ceremony could proceed swiftly.

⁶⁰⁹ The WBM have the site under a preservation order. However, whether this means the actual memorial will be subject to repairs as and when necessary remains unclear. It has not weathered particularly well in places, with fractures appearing in the stone, as shown in some of the photographs in this chapter.

memorial in place, and the site in public ownership, the process of adding to that memorial space became much easier.

vii) Interpreting The Women's Bloc

Although Ingeborg Hunzinger only completed the installation in 1994, she conceived the memorial sculpture at a time when, in the late 1980s, there was relatively little information available on the protest. As a work of art, it is in any case intended to evoke individual interpretations and responses rather than present a particular reading of the past. Having established the background context to this memorial project, in the following I analyse the sculpture ensemble and how the protest is represented in it.

As the images included in this chapter show, The Women's Bloc is a six-piece sculpture carved from red porphyry.⁶¹⁰ In the centre it depicts two women in a supportive embrace, the taller of the two figures providing physical as well as moral support, cradling the smaller woman's head in her hands in what is both a comforting and a protective gesture.



Figure 3 The central section of the sculpture

⁶¹⁰ In my earlier publication, 'Rosenstraße: A Complex Site of German-Jewish Memory', I erroneously described The Women's Bloc as a five-piece sculpture.



Figure 4 The central section with the fellow protesters visible in the background

These two women are surrounded by additional sculptures, which introduce further meanings. Immediately behind and around them are two blocks. One portrays persecution, death and destruction. At the end of this block a shrouded figure has been carved with the Star of David above it, simultaneously symbolising Jewishness and death. Subsumed within this block, Hunzinger has carved a number of women and children. In the bottom left corner, a crouched figure has been carved. He seems to observe and read the situation. The next block consists of two parts, which appear to have been torn asunder.⁶¹¹ At the front these portray the imprisonment of Jewish men under Nazism (on the left) and the protest, symbolised by a woman striving towards the imprisoned man (on the right). In both blocks faces protrude from either the front or the side, in what appear to be death masks, alluding again to the omnipresence of death. On the reverse there is an inscription, framed by a skeletal figure, his arms raised as if in crucifixion. It reads: „Die Kraft des zivilen Ungehorsams die Kraft der Liebe bezwingen die Gewalt der Diktatur. Gebt uns unsere Männer wieder. Frauen standen hier. Tod besiegend. 600 Jüdische Männer waren frei” (“The power of civil disobedience, the power of love overcome the might of the dictatorship. Give us our husbands back. Wives stood here. Conquering death. 600 Jewish men were freed”).⁶¹²

⁶¹¹ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest*, 2002, p. 93.

⁶¹² My translation. The figure of 600 has become increasingly obscured on the sculpture as it has become more weatherworn. In the photos included in this chapter it is all but eroded, but can be seen clearly in an earlier photograph in Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.95. It is unclear how Hunzinger arrived at the figure of 600 men, given that most accounts at the time refer to anywhere between one and six thousand detainees.



Figure 5 Reverse view of the central sections, with the inscription to the left and images of death and destruction on the block to the right



Figure 6 The shrouded figure beneath the Star of David



Figure 7 The fractured block



Figure 8 A close-up of the fractured block, showing further weatherworn fracturing



Figure 9 The reverse of the fractured block and inscription

There are two further parts to the sculpture ensemble. A short distance to the left is a single block. At the front is a musician; he holds a broken violin. Reliefs on the left side and reverse of the block depict a more ancient persecution, the Babylonian exile. This allusion to the Jews' first mass expulsion places their persecution under the Nazis in the broader historical context.⁶¹³ At the opposite, right-hand side of the green space is the final block in the shape of a bench on which a man sits, gazing into the distance.

⁶¹³ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.92.



Figure 10 The Musician



Figure 11 Reliefs on the same block



Figure 12 Reliefs on the back of this block



Figure 13 The crouched figure



Figure 14 The man on the bench

The Women's Bloc has the protest at its centre, incorporating it into the contexts of persecution and exile, both in the Jewish tradition and during the National Socialist era. Through the image of the imprisoned forced labourers, one of whom strives to break free, it depicts the recent experience of persecution and juxtaposes it with imagery of

mass death and expulsion (illustrated in the neighbouring block and further to the left). In addition, the sculpture contains images of destruction. These have been incorporated to symbolise the violent termination of the Jewish-German cultural symbiosis.

The memorial ensemble evokes Jewish suffering, but it also points to simultaneous non-Jewish suffering. In order to demarcate them an ethnic/religious coding is deployed, both visually and textually. Traditional Jewish symbols carved into the sculpture provide visual coding. The symbols, traditionally found on gravestones, carry different meanings. Whilst knowledge of religious symbolism renders their meaning apparent, even without that knowledge it is clear that they have been used to mark out the figures near to the symbols as being Jewish.⁶¹⁴ Conversely, an absence of symbolism, or ‘zero coding’ around several figures marks them out as non-Jewish, presumably Christian.

viii) Solidarity and Unity in The Women’s Block

The Women’s Bloc is rich in symbolism and potential meaning. In the following I focus on the theme of female solidarity, then on the Judeo-Christian iconography, and finally on the symbolism of the fractured block.

Notions of non-Jewish female courage and solidarity are key to the sculpture. They are conveyed through the image of the two women, which is located at the centre, so that everything that the memorial depicts takes place both around and in relation to them. They are visible from almost every angle.⁶¹⁵ Viewed across from either of the outer lying blocks, they remain in the viewer’s sightline. The fact there is zero coding in this instance indicates that the two women are non-Jewish, i.e. they are German. They stand metaphorically for the protesters, for their courage in the face of the events surrounding them.

Looking in detail, we see that whilst the smaller of the two physically buckles under pressure, appearing exhausted, leaning against the other for moral as well as physical support, her head cast down and expression mournful, the other, taller of the two

⁶¹⁴ With thanks to Chaja Boebel of the tour group Milch & Honig for information regarding the symbolism on the sculpture. Interview with the author of this thesis, Berlin, 18 July 2006.

⁶¹⁵ Even when looking at the reverse of the blocks it is possible to see the central piece, either through the gaps between them, or through the fracture.

comforts and protects her in an act of solidarity and mutual support. She looks equally sorrowful, and gazes upwards, a stance that suggests both looking heavenward for inspiration and looking up towards the windows of the house opposite, in the hope of seeing their spouse or child. Others look on at them. In the block behind and slightly to the right of this central piece, Hunzinger has carved a group of women and children huddled together, some of them with their mouths open, as if chanting, others with anguished expressions on their faces. They are incorporated within the larger block, but distinct from it at the same time, their proximity signifying their relativity, providing a visual reference to intermarriage, and to mixed Jewish-Christian heritage. The group are united. They look on, in a further example of solidarity, of general human kindness.

Although Hunzinger depicted solidarity and courage visually, to reinforce that image, she also physically inscribed through the memorial's title and inscription the idea of non-Jewish courage in response to Jewish persecution. The title *The Women's Bloc* refers in the first instance to the united front of the participants in the act of protest. On another level, the word *bloc* also functions as a metaphor, evoking the ideas of the immovability of the protesters, and their presence physically blocking the street. It is possible to read the inscription in two ways, both of which imply unity and courage. Interpreted literally, it suggests that the protest forced the Nazi regime to concede and release the detainees. It presupposes that their deportation was intended and that the protest therefore saved them from their deaths. This interpretation is unsurprising, given that no alternative theory had been presented at the time Hunzinger drew up plans for the sculpture. Aside from any information provided to her by Kostia Müntz of the *Centrum Judaicum*, who she referred to as a walking history book,⁶¹⁶ the only readily available sources on the protest would have been the newspaper articles and accounts in memoirs and biographies referred to in Chapter One.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ Hunzinger, 'Marx und Michelangelo', p.110.

⁶¹⁷ These included, for example, the 1945 article by Georg Zivier, along with later works such as Inge Unikower's 1964 newspaper article and 1978 book, as well as Heinz Knobloch's 1985 biography of Mathilde Jacob (Rosa Luxembourg's secretary), which refers to the events in Rosenstraße and calls for their memorialisation. These either explicitly drew the conclusion that the protest was a success or were ambiguous. None directly refuted the idea that the protesters had forced the regime to concede.



Figure 15 The Christ-like figure framed by the inscription, arms aloft as if partly shackled to a cross

Read figuratively, however, the inscription is more ambiguous as to the effect of the protest on the regime's decision. It merely states that a protest took place and that Jewish men were released, without stating cause and effect. Why the detainees were released is not explained so as to allow the individual to draw their own conclusion. What is apparent, however, is the presence of solidarity. The opening line, in its reference to the power of civil disobedience and love, attests to the continuation of a German-Jewish partnership in spite of the regime. The line "love overcomes the might of dictatorship" is a reference to protest, but also to the regime's failure to bring about an end to existing intermarriages. This is further underscored by the incorporation of the protesters' chant, "Give us our husbands back", and the final line, "Jewish men were free". In this regard the Judeo-Christian iconography Hunzinger has also incorporated is important. The inscription frames the figure of an emaciated man, his arms held aloft bearing the weight of a cross, albeit a partly broken one. The image evokes the Crucifixion; it is also an enduring, instantly recognisable image of persecution. Whilst it may be seen as a reference to Jewish persecution and thus to the Holocaust, albeit through the use of Christian iconography, it may also be interpreted as an allusion to inherent Judeo-Christian unity, embodied in the figure of Christ. At the same time it is one that refers to the endurance of intermarriage, of unity in the face of Nazi persecution. We can see this in the way in which the Christ-like figure, whilst still partly shackled to the cross, nevertheless strives towards freedom and away from persecution. That he is still partly attached may be read as a reference to the fact

persecution continued after the protest. However, it can also be seen to signify that he will eventually break free.



Figure 16 The imprisoned man striving for freedom



Figure 17 The imprisoned man's wife

The theme of Judeo-Christian unity and intermarriage is overtly depicted in the fractured block. The one section depicts imprisoned men, held captive, squashed up against the bars of their prison. There is one man, however, who although still partly bound to the others, the one arm partly behind bars, in a similarity with the aforementioned Christ-like figure, is striving away from captivity towards freedom, and more specifically towards the woman on the other half of the fractured block. She is at liberty. Yet, she similarly strives forwards, her arms outstretched towards him, fist clenched in a gesture of defiance at his captors. The expression on their faces is one of mutual anguish and determination, signifying their despair at their separation and their will to be reunited. Following the religious/ethnic coding once again, it is clear that the man who strives towards freedom is Jewish, whilst the woman reaching out towards him is a non-Jewish German woman; they undoubtedly represent husband and wife. This striving towards one another against the constraints imposed upon them is symbolic on a number of levels. It suggests that the man remains bound literally and figuratively to Judaism, but the fact he is striving away from his fellow prisoners is suggestive of their differing fates: whilst he strives towards freedom, and survival, they remain captive, ultimately to face death.

The stone block from which these figures have been carved is, as I suggested above, fractured, but this division is not natural, rather it is man-made. In spite of this fracture, the two figures strive towards each other, signifying resistance to their unnatural and undesired separation. It is a metaphor for the act of protest. The man seeks to break

through the physical barrier that separates him from his wife, referring both to their desire to be reunited and their longing for unity in the present. The woman stands alone, symbolising how, although the protest developed into collective opposition, each participant was present for themselves, fighting for their husband, their children. Hunzinger seems to imply here that Judeo-Christian unity is inherent, and that Nazism attempted but failed to put it asunder. Hence the solidarity of the German-Jewish family, Hunzinger indicated, could not be easily broken – a reference again to the protest but perhaps also to her own parents, whose marriage survived the Third Reich. This interpretation is further underlined by the freestanding sculpture, which is located behind the main blocks and depicts a couple embracing. It represents *das Wiedersehen*, the reunion.⁶¹⁸ Examining this more closely we see that the couple's expression appears mournful, reflecting their traumatic experience. They gaze outward, to the future, but the gaze is full of uncertainty as to what the future holds, underscoring the insecurity of intermarried couples after the release of the Rosenstraße detainees. Yet they hold on to one another, suggesting that whatever the future holds they will face it together, not apart. Moreover, these figures have been carved from the same piece of stone. They are conjoined, as if to suggest that the individuals are as one, that they naturally belong to one another, and to enforce a division would be abnormal. Arguably, in spite of the endurance of many intermarriages, the idea of an inherent German-Jewish unity represented more of an ideal than a reality, yet it was one that was popular and appealing at the time of the memorial's inception.



Figure 18 The reunion and images of mass death and destruction

⁶¹⁸ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.92.

ix) Contrasts and Implicit Criticisms

Whilst Hunzinger thus emphasises the existence and endurance of German-Jewish solidarity in *The Women's Bloc*, she also attempted to balance notions of courage, rescue, unity and survival with contrasting images of death, destruction and the breakdown of the German-Jewish relationship, so as to prevent an overly simplified reading; whilst it celebrated solidarity, it also held non-Jewish Germans accountable. As this section shows, *The Women's Bloc* offers a range of alternative perspectives, allowing the viewer to arrive at conflicting readings of the memorial.

Keeping the focus on the reunited couple discussed above, it is clear that whilst they gaze outwards towards the future, immediately behind them everything lies in ruins. Their proximity suggests that this devastation is part of the recent past. The couple thus signify the minority, reinforcing the idea that whilst a minority survived – and perhaps only because of intermarriage – the majority perished. To the left carvings depict the remnants of a once ornate building, now reduced to rubble. To the right emaciated, skeletal figures are piled together, contorted, so that the number of individual figures becomes indistinct, thus signifying anonymous mass death. This image is further reinforced in the shrouded figure, which juts out of the end of the column, with only his or her feet exposed, so as to keep his or her identity ambiguous and concealed, once again symbolising death but also the anonymity of the victims (Figure 6). That it represents Jewish death is apparent from the religious/ethnic coding; a Star of David looms above the figure, drawing attention both to Jewishness and to the Star as a symbol of Nazi oppression.

The inclusion of references to the destruction of Jewish life suggests an attempt to find some sort of equilibrium between the images of unity and survival discussed in the previous section, without allowing the context in which they took place to be forgotten, and the protest to become an exculpatory myth. That these images are at the back of the block, however, may also be a subtle indication and criticism of the place of the Holocaust in official remembrance, particularly in the GDR. Hunzinger positions this out of immediate sight and behind as a critique of the way in which remembrance of Jewish suffering had, prior to the 1980s, often been universalised, or subsumed within the anti-fascist master-narrative.

Further criticism can be found in the two other outlying sections of the memorial ensemble in which Hunzinger draws attention to the failure and the destruction of the German-Jewish relationship. Focusing on the block to the left of the central sculpture, we note that its possible meaning is multi-layered. To the side of the block there is a crouched figure, leaning over what appears to be a book. Gernot Jochheim suggests this represents the prophet Daniel, and Cornelia Schirmer suggests he is reading from the Torah.⁶¹⁹ On the opposite side and to the rear of the block are reliefs depicting the Babylonian exile. As I suggested above, this twins ancient and recent mass expulsion. In addition it reinforces a sense of the gravity of Jewish expulsion, this time from German culture. Here the significance of the musician becomes all the more apparent. He holds a broken violin in his right hand and a broken bow in his left, a potent symbol of cultural destruction. As we saw in the previous chapter, in von Trotta's film, music played a key, celebratory role unifying Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. By contrast, Hunzinger's reference to music signifies the breakdown of the German-Jewish relationship, pointing to loss.

Applying the ethnic/religious coding, we note the absence of any symbols around the musician, suggesting that the musician is not Jewish, as one might initially assume. Two further factors reinforce this interpretation. Firstly, he faces away from the rest of the sculpture, he does not look on, indicating that it is not something he is involved in, rather he is distanced from the events, even though its affects have implications for him. Secondly, he leans forward from the block, implying a separation from what has gone before, that he leaves this behind in his wake as he moves into the future. Given that the remainder of this block alludes to exile and persecution in ancient tradition, the musician's movement away signifies a separation from all things Jewish. He gazes into the distance and his expression is mournful. I suggest that he is therefore symbolic of the rupture in German culture, and specifically the loss of the Jewish contribution to it as a result of the Holocaust. The musician stands metonymically for all types of culture. He signifies German inner lamentation, not perhaps for German culpability, but for its consequences, the irreplaceable loss to German culture through Jewish absence. Herein lies Hunzinger's criticism, namely that Germans mourn not only the loss of the Jew, but

⁶¹⁹ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.93; Schirmer, C., 'Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße'. In: M. Juschka and H. Ruppel, eds. *Zusatzmaterialien zur Publikation Biblische Texte und Berliner Orte*, pp. 6-9, here p.8. Available from: http://www.ekbo.de/Datien/bildungswerk_kirchetag.pdf [Accessed 5. April 2008].

also the loss of the Jewish contribution to German culture, and hence the German mourns for himself. Cornelia Schirmer argues that the musician is symbolic of the destruction of Jewish culture in Germany as an act of self-robbery, the extent of which has not yet been grasped.⁶²⁰ He conveys the problematic nature of how the Holocaust is remembered and represented. Hunzinger's work implicitly criticises Germans who merely mourn their own loss as a result of the Holocaust.

Moving back towards the central block, we see a figure representing a philosopher crouched in the bottom left corner. The absence of a symbol near him again indicates that this is a non-Jewish German philosopher, one who can see the protest and the surrounding events in his peripheral sightline. Yet it is as if he does not want to see them. In this way Hunzinger also created a visual allusion to the reluctance to make the Holocaust central to notions of collective memory – both in East and in West Germany, preferring instead to focus on German suffering. Despite his reluctance, the philosopher is unable to avoid gazing at the scenes depicted before him, as they always catch his eye. They have what Anne Fuchs terms a 'ghosting effect', alluding to the long afterlife of the Nazi past in German memory.⁶²¹ Cornelia Schirmer suggests that „er scheint, [...] das Geschehen wahrzunehmen“.⁶²² The philosopher, a passive figure, thus symbolises the nation's guilty conscience.

Further criticisms can be discerned in the last section of the sculpture, the lone man sitting on a bench, which has again been positioned at a distance from the central sections of the sculpture, this time to the right hand side. On first sight it may be assumed, as Gernot Jochheim suggested, that this is a visual reference to the many anti-Jewish laws introduced by the regime, including the law forbidding Jews from sitting on park benches. Whilst it is possible that Hunzinger intended to draw attention to the everyday prohibitions Jewish Germans faced, given the intricate and detailed imagery elsewhere in the memorial sculpture, that would seem a little obvious, and there is an alternative interpretation.

Once again, the absence of a symbol around him suggests he is not Jewish. Upon closer inspection, the man appears contemplative, relatively relaxed perhaps, with his left arm

⁶²⁰ Schirmer 'Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße', p.8.

⁶²¹ Fuchs, *Phantoms of War*, p.7.

⁶²² Op.Cit., p.7.

laid across the back of the bench, with space enough beside him for another person to sit, which, as Jochheim has suggested, is an invitation to sit.⁶²³ Hence the figure could imply the Jew is once again invited to sit with the German, that he may return to the fold, expressing the desire for a positive German-Jewish relationship. It could equally signify someone who is not expected, but has already departed, the empty space signifying his or her absence in the present day, ergo the absent companion is the German Jew, who is no longer a part of the German's life. The seated figure looks towards the sculpture, and hence to both the protest and Jewish persecution. He solemnly observes the scene before him; he is a witness, a bystander who does not actively participate but looks on whilst his former companion is persecuted. He is therefore complicit through his silence. The figure on the bench has been incorporated to highlight, and to criticise the passivity of Germans in the face of Jewish persecution. Whilst Hunzinger draws attention to complicity, she simultaneously demonstrates that it did not necessarily extend beyond witnessing, recognizing that, from a moral perspective, non-intervention was at least preferable to participation. In this way The Women's Bloc ensures that the wider context of complicity and passivity is conveyed.

For all the figures represented in the memorial, there is one noticeable absence: the perpetrator, the Nazi, the consequences of whose actions are present throughout the entire memorial. While he is denied representation, the visitor cannot reflect on the memorial without contemplating by whom the events depicted were caused. In this sense the Nazi is omnipresent in the visitor's mind.

x) Concluding Observations on The Women's Bloc

We have seen how Hunzinger's The Women's Bloc offers a number of different interpretations. Whilst it honours the protest, and perhaps even idealises it, the memorial not only incorporates criticism of German actions then, it may also subtly criticise the way the events and the Holocaust are remembered. The different messages that can be detected in The Women's Bloc underline the complex and contradictory nature of remembering and representing the Holocaust, and opposition to it. Yet, the very fact that it prompts questions encourages viewers to engage with and contemplate the past, without imposing a particular explanation.

⁶²³ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.93.

Following its installation citizens' groups began lobbying for a supplementary display that would explain Hunzinger's memorial, providing factual information on the events represented by the sculpture, and drawing attention to the fact that they took place on this street. Both citizens' groups and individual memorial entrepreneurs felt that the work of art was incapable on its own of conveying what happened in Rosenstraße. By the mid-1990s there was a concerted effort to give the protest and the site a more prominent position in the city's memorial landscape. In fact two projects ran in parallel – the memorial plaque initiated by hotel owner Wolfgang Looock and the Topography of Terror's permanent on-site exhibition. That Looock's project was completed first largely resulted from the fact that construction work was taking place in the street at the time, which delayed the Topography's project. Following the chronology of commemoration, this next section focuses on Looock's memorial plaque, which has hitherto been largely overlooked in relation to the protest's memorialisation. The later section examines the Topography's on-site exhibition separately. Each section examines the key messages these supplementary memorials attempted to convey and asks why they were chosen, arguing that analysing what elements of the past have been constructed tells us important things about the priorities of the memory makers.

2. The Memorial Plaque: Explaining Rosenstraße and Guiding Remembrance

Like the sculpture, the memorial plaque resulted from an individual initiative and will to remember. However, it was much easier to realise, primarily because the site on which it is located was already in the ownership of the memorial entrepreneur. This section examines the background to the project before providing an analysis of the plaque, which was installed nearly three years after The Women's Bloc. The plaque functions as a guide, not only directing the visitor towards the memorial sculpture, but also suggesting how the events may be understood.



Figure 19 The memorial plaque

i) Background to the Memorial Plaque

On 8th September 1998 the memorial plaque was affixed to the exterior supporting column of the recently rebuilt edifice, Rosenstraße 2-4. The dedication ceremony was attended by the then President of the Federal Parliament, Rita Süssmuth, the chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Ignatz Bubis, the initiator and campaigner for the Central Holocaust Memorial, Lea Rosh, as well as the district mayor for Berlin Mitte, and members of the public.

Plans for this project, however, began several years earlier. In 1995, property developer and hotel owner Wolfgang Looock bought the only remaining pre-war building on Rosenstraße along with the neighbouring plots, re-developing it into a hotel and office complex. Both Gernot Jochheim and Jennifer Jordan have written of Looock's desire to anchor the site's present to its past, and to prevent it from losing its historical significance.⁶²⁴ At the same time, the memorial also marked Looock's establishment out as different from those of his nearby competitors, giving it "an identity distinct from corporate chain hotels", a unique selling point.⁶²⁵ The hotel's own website draws attention to the events, without however stating exactly what took place there, only that

⁶²⁴ Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.85.

⁶²⁵ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.118. The Hotel Alexander Plaza is part of a chain, albeit a small one, the Classik Hotel Collection, which has two Berlin hotels, as well as establishments in Munich and Magdeburg.

the site, and the building, has an exciting history in the famous Rosenstraße.⁶²⁶ The memorial plaque seemingly resulted from joint commercial and historical interests.

ii) Analysis of the Plaque's Form and Content

The simplicity of the memorial plaque belies the complex nature of the process it engages the viewer in, as well as the factors influencing its content and its meaning. Made of reinforced glass, the large rectangular plaque bears a short description of the events, above which the photograph of the former Jewish Community Building has been superimposed. The form and content are significant. The use of glass not only marks a departure from earlier, more traditional styles, but also, and more significantly, it connotes transparency, and the idea of looking back with clarity.

Locating the memorial plaque on the exterior of Rosenstraße 2-4 affords the visitor the choice of whether to engage with the events it evokes, or not. It is prominent enough to be easily visible, but it is far away enough from the pavement that the individual has to choose to go to it, and thus to engage with it. Upon closer inspection the memorial draws attention to both the destruction and demolition of the original building and the authenticity of place: the memorial's location reminds the visitor that the events occurred at the very place he or she now finds him or herself. This is further reinforced through the use of Abraham Pisarek's photograph, which provides the 'evidential force' described by Barthes, whilst simultaneously alluding to the fact that the building no longer exists.⁶²⁷ It connects the site to the event and thus allows the visitor an insight into how the street once looked, drawing him or her into the memorial process, in a similar way to the use of photography seen elsewhere in this thesis, drawing them into what Marianne Hirsch termed the memorial circle.⁶²⁸

It also functions as a means of orientation, guiding the viewer physically (in terms of orientating them within the landscape, and drawing attention to the sculpture) and towards an interpretation. The text on the plaque sets out the context in which the events and their significance are to be understood. As we see, it bears some comparison to the key themes evoked in Hunzinger's sculpture. It reads as follows:

⁶²⁶ Anon. '4-Sterne Stadt-Hotel in Berlin-Mitte nahe der Museumsinsel'. Available from: <http://classik-hotel-collection.com/hotel-alexander-plaza-.html> [Accessed 17.06.2013].

⁶²⁷ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.89.

⁶²⁸ Hirsch, 'Projected Memory', p.7.

An dieser Stelle Ecke Rosenstraße/Heidereutergasse stand bis zu seiner Zerstörung in der letzten Kriegstagen 1945 das Gebäude der Sozial-Verwaltung der Jüdischen Gemeinde Berlins, Rosenstraße 2-4. Es war nach der Fabrik-Aktion der Nationalsozialisten vom 27./28. Februar 1943 Gefängnis für viele hundert jüdische Ehepartner und Kinder in sogenannten Mischehen. Vor dem Haus protestierten tage- und nächtelang Hunderte von Menschen, überwiegend Frauen, gegen eine drohende Deportation ihrer Angehörigen nach Auschwitz. Nach einer Woche gewaltlosen Protestes kamen die meisten Gefangenen frei. Das benachbarte Denkmal der Berliner Künstlerin Ingeborg Hunzinger ist diesem Ereignis gewidmet. Hinter dem Gebäude befand sich in der Heidereutergasse die älteste Synagoge Berlins. 1714 eingeweiht, wurde 1942 in ihr der letzte Gottesdienst abgehalten vor der Zerstörung 1945.

Whilst the text is necessarily brief, it is nonetheless insightful. In continuity with the visual association with the photograph and its location, the first line of the text reinforces the significance of place, and states that this was once Jewish land. At the time the plaque was installed the ruins of the synagogue, which are visible today, had yet to be excavated. Reference to the destruction is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it serves to reinforce how the plaque serves as a marker of the physical absence of the building depicted. Anna Dempsey, following Walter Benjamin, has remarked on the importance of spaces of desolation, visible markers of emptiness and ruin as a means of provoking or reawakening awareness of the past.⁶²⁹ Secondly, it also draws attention to the haunting absence of Jewish life that was once present in the building depicted, and may prompt reflection on the reasons for its destruction. Here we can see a parallel with Hunzinger's memorial, in so far as the text places primary emphasis on the Jewish experience, ensuring the Holocaust takes precedence over the act of protest, and that the protest is understood within this wider context.

The plaque's wording indicates a subtle shift in the protest's memorialisation, in so far as it simply describes the protesters as the Jewish prisoners' relatives, making no

⁶²⁹ Dempsey, A.M., 2005. 'Berlin Traditions and Potsdamer Platz: The Architectural Reconstruction and the Transformation of a Public Place'. Available from: <http://www.gfl-journal.de/2-2005/dempsey.html> [Accessed 20 December 2010].

attempt to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. It seems that towards the end of the 1990s what mattered most was remembering Nazism's victims, whilst remembering opposition to that was of secondary significance. The plaque acknowledges that there were those who were prepared to take a stand, yet does not allow their actions to displace the greater Jewish suffering.

Of further significance is the way in which the protest is explained. On the one hand it largely followed existing historiographical interpretations in its declaration that the protesters demonstrated against the threatened deportation of their relatives to Auschwitz. It presupposes that the regime intended to deport the detainees, and hence reinforces that interpretation. On the other hand it introduces ambiguity as to the cause of their release, which deviated from previous representations at the time. The text on the memorial plaque simply states: „Nach einer Woche gewaltlosen Protestes kamen die meisten Gefangenen frei.” Whilst this could be interpreted as a statement of the protest's impact, equally it could be a mere observation of fact. Moreover, it also introduces another element, drawing attention to the fact that a minority of the detainees were not released, but without offering any explanation for what happened to them, thereby subtly undermining the idea of the protest's success.

Lastly, the memorial plaque draws the visitor's attention to the palimpsestic nature of remembering –a theme we return to later in this chapter. As we know from the debate over land ownership and site usage in relation to Hunzinger's memorial, the Jewish Claims Conference had placed a restitution claim on the land, but had withdrawn when it became apparent that building on that site would not be possible within the existing building laws regulating land usage. Hence, the significance of the site's Jewish past was at least temporarily lost from view. This memorial plaque, however, emphasised the long Jewish association with the site and as the location of Berlin's oldest synagogue. Pointing to the fact that the last service was held in 1942 and that it was destroyed in 1945 not only associates the loss of the synagogue with the Nazi regime, but it neatly circumvents mentioning that whilst the synagogue was damaged as a result of the aerial war, it could have been repaired, but was pulled down in the late 1960s to make way for the urban regeneration still visible today. This highlights the priorities and values behind this memorialisation, emphasising that making the Jewish past and its loss visible remained the priority.

3. 'Advertising' Memorialisation: The Topography of Terror's Permanent On-Site Exhibition in Rosenstraße

On 4th March 1999, six months after the memorial plaque had been unveiled, the Topography of Terror museum installed its permanent on-site exhibition mounted on two advertising columns in Rosenstraße. One is located outside the office block, once the site of the former Jewish Community Building, with the other close to the intersection between Rosenstraße and Karl Liebknecht-Straße. It is an exhibition, a memorial, but also a work of art, given its carefully considered graphic design, which is imbued with layers of meaning. For the purpose of clarity in this chapter I refer to it as an 'exhibition'.



Figure 20 One of the two advertising columns

As the photograph illustrates, an array of texts and images has been mounted on a red background. These have been placed in a seemingly random order, in keeping with the model of the advertising pillar, onto which successive posters are pasted. The exhibition contains an explanatory text and a map of the area; personal accounts of detainees, a protester, a bystander, and Propaganda Minister Goebbels; a report by SS-Hauptsturmbannführer a.d. Ruthen criticising the treatment of Jews during the Factory Action and the impression it gave of the regime, police logbook entries relating to the 'Factory Action', a list of deportees, and, lastly, a report on their arrival at Auschwitz. The exhibition contains three headings: *Protest gegen NS Terror – Rosenstraße 1943* (Protest against National Socialist Terror – Rosenstraße 1943), *Die Ausnahme – Rosenstraße 1943* (The Exception – Rosenstraße 1943), and *Frauen protestierten –*

Rosenstraße 1943 (Women protested – Rosenstraße 1943). Photographs of the Jewish Community Building and deportation centres at Levetzowstraße and Concert House Clou are provided, alongside images of the deportation stations at Grunewald and Putlitzstraße.⁶³⁰ The exhibition requires regular maintenance, as the columns become easily weather-worn and the posters have to be replaced approximately every three to four months. Given the fact that exhibitions have a relatively limited life-span, the fact that this one has been in place for 14 years, in which time research has developed considerably, it seems entirely plausible that it will be revised and updated in the near future.



Figure 21 The weather-worn advertising column on the corner of Rosenstraße and Karl Liebknecht Straße

In this section I again consider the background to the memorial, before analysing its form, function and how it can be interpreted. The exhibition is in keeping with the broader pedagogical aims and style of the *Topography of Terror*'s exhibits, in which historical advertising columns mark open wounds in the urban landscape.⁶³¹ This introduces a shift in memorialisation of the Rosenstraße protest, and signifies a deliberate attempt on the part of the memorial entrepreneurs involved to move away from the heroisation and idealisation of the protest that the exhibition's original curator, Dr Gabriele Camphausen, felt was signified by Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial in particular.⁶³² After analysing the exhibition this section considers how in the intervening years, as a result of a shift in memory culture, the *Topography* has

⁶³⁰ With the exception of Mauerstraße, separate memorials mark each of these locations, with the Train Carriage Memorial (1988), at Levetzowstraße, and Volkmar Haase's jagged gravestone sculpture (1987) overlooking Putlitzstraße station from the bridge above. Grunewald has two memorials, Karol Broniatowski's human silhouettes memorial (1991), and the 'Track 17' memorial (1998).

⁶³¹ Till, *The New Berlin*, p.102.

⁶³² Interview with Dr Gabriele Camphausen, Berlin, 25 July 2006.

reconfigured its representation of the protest, and how this has been integrated into their open-air exhibition in Niederkirchnerstraße. Finally, I ask what implications it may have for future revisions to the exhibition in Rosenstraße.

i) Background to the Topography of Terror

Given the central role of citizens' initiatives in remembering the protest, it is appropriate that the Topography of Terror has taken on responsibility for its memorialisation, given that the museum itself is the product of citizens' initiatives in the 1980s, and developed from the temporary exhibition project created to mark the 750th anniversary of Berlin. James Young has suggested that the Topography of Terror site "primarily recalled the absence of memory, the destruction of telltale ruins, the nation's struggle with itself."⁶³³ The memorials there also illustrate the inherently politicised nature of remembering and the dynamics that shape collective memory, in which memorials may reinforce the status quo, but also enjoin us to challenge it. Karen Till has suggested that in its early years the foundation signified a challenge to neo-conservative attempts to achieve normalization (in this instance Till refers to the pursuit of a positive German national history, promoted by the then Kohl government), and that the Topography has repeatedly sought to emphasise difficult memories and to anchor these in the memorial landscape.⁶³⁴

What then were the Topography's organisers' aims, and how did they attempt to achieve them, both in the main exhibition, and in Rosenstraße? Andreas Nachama, executive director of the Topography of Terror, has identified three aims, namely "to make traces of the past legible, [and] help to understand what happened, and what consequences this has for the present."⁶³⁵ The Topography of Terror's function, according to Caroline Pearce, is to instigate remembering and learning, both of the misdeeds perpetrated and National Socialism's victims.⁶³⁶ It promotes individual engagement, providing information so that the visitor's learning may be elicited through "discovery, dialogue and independent reflection", and to this end it avoids

⁶³³ Young, *The Art of Memory*, p.29

⁶³⁴ Till, *The New Berlin*, p.128-9.

⁶³⁵ Nachama, A., 2010. 'Vorwort'. In: C. Steur and M. Kutzner, eds. *Berlin 1933-1945 Zwischen Propaganda und Terror*. Stiftung Topographie des Terrors; Berlin, pp.6-7, here p.7.

⁶³⁶ Pearce, C., 2010. 'The Role of German Perpetrator Sites in Teaching and Confronting the Nazi Past'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 168-177, here p.173.

monocausal explanations or inducing an over-easy or simplified identification with any one group of people.⁶³⁷ In this way, Till argues, it “represents Germany as a society with a lot of internal variation”, which means the visitor will “have to differentiate” rather than rely on clearly defined victim/ perpetrator dichotomies.⁶³⁸ The emphasis on individual engagement and ambiguity constitutes a similarity with Hunzinger’s memorial in so far as it too was intended to be open to interpretation. Nevertheless, as becomes apparent in what follows, the exhibition guides interpretation to a greater extent, by virtue of the information it includes (and excludes).

Although the Topography is now theoretically an independent museum, it is jointly supported by the state of Berlin and the Federal Republic. In addition, it also fulfils advisory functions, at regional, national and international levels, including participation in the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, established in Stockholm in 1998. It is involved in key government-funded initiatives such as the Permanent Conference for Directors of National Socialist Memorial Sites in the Berlin Area (Ständige Konferenz der Leiter der NS-Gedenkstätten im Berliner Raum), established in 2009. As such it plays a key role in shaping the contemporary memorial landscape.⁶³⁹

ii) Exhibition in Context: Background to the Rosenstraße Advertising Columns

I argued at the beginning of this chapter that memorialisation is a process. It is perhaps also helpful, in the context of the Topography’s exhibition, to perceive it as a dialogue, between institutions as well as with grassroots activists. The Rosenstraße Advertising Columns resulted from a dialogue between the Gedenktafelkommission der BVV Berlin Mitte, the Verein Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin e.V. and the Topography of Terror, which began in the mid-1990s. What is notable, however, is that even with the interest generated by Hunzinger’s memorial, the Topography’s project was by no means guaranteed, as the correspondence in the original project file reveals.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁷ Ibid., p.169 and 175.

⁶³⁸ Till, *The New Berlin*, p.131.

⁶³⁹ The Topography of Terror’s own website provides a succinct history of the museum and its origins. For a more detailed analysis see for example: Till, *The New Berlin* and Jordan, *Structures of Memory*.

⁶⁴⁰ The unpublished Projekt Rosenstraße file was provided courtesy of Dr Gabriele Camphausen, Executive Director of the Topography of Terror at the time of the project.

In lobbying the Topography of Terror, Hildegard Hoffmann of the Gedenktafelkommission argued that an exhibition would provide an explanation for Hunzinger's memorial, suggesting it take the form of the advertising column, as the temporary exhibition had done, but acknowledging Andreas Nachama's point that the content would need to be re-worked.⁶⁴¹ Over two years later, Christiane Hoss of the Verein Aktives Museum similarly indicated that Hunzinger's memorial was only accessible to those who already knew of the protest, making a renewed plea for the exhibition's realisation.⁶⁴² Although it appears the Topography had committed to it, plans were delayed, partly due to on-going construction work in Rosenstraße, which made installing an exhibition an impossibility in the immediate term, and partly and more tellingly due to issues over the proposed content.

The idea of using advertising columns was generally approved of. However, the suggestion that the exhibition should contain extracts from Gernot Jochheim's popular history, accompanied by Pisarek's photograph of Rosenstraße, a street map and chronology of Jewish persecution, and that these should be surrounded by replica advertising posters from the time by companies such as the KaDeWe and Wertheim, did not meet with the foundation committee's approval.⁶⁴³ More importantly the proposed content fell short of the foundation's requirements. For one, it did not provide enough detail, nor did it offer the plurality that the Topography aims for so as to encourage independent reflection and avoid monocausal explanations. For another, it was argued that replica advertising posters would have been more distracting than conducive to learning. Plans were put on hold. Once construction work in Rosenstraße was complete the Aktives Museum and Gedenktafelkommission lobbied for the exhibition once again. Andreas Nachama advised that the resumption of the project was dependent on two conditions, namely the approval of the relevant foundation committee and the development of a new concept for the exhibition's graphic design.⁶⁴⁴ In addition, he suggested it should include a short history of the site, including

⁶⁴¹ Unpublished letter from Hildegard Hoffmann of the Gedenktafelkommission to Dr. Andreas Nachama, Stiftung Topographie des Terrors, 27.4.1996.

⁶⁴² Unpublished letter from Christiane Hoss, Verein Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand to Dr Gabriele Camphausen, Stiftung Topographie des Terrors, 29.5.1998.

⁶⁴³ File note from Jörg Szafraniak to Dr Gabriele Camphausen, 04.06.1998.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

reference the synagogue, quotations from a range of written sources, and a reference to Hunzinger's sculpture.⁶⁴⁵ The exhibition was completed within less than 12 months.

iii) Aims and Intentions of the Rosenstraße Exhibition

Gabriele Camphausen has explained that the exhibition has a dual function, namely to encourage remembrance and to inform future generations about the events in the Rosenstraße.⁶⁴⁶ At the same time, however, it was not intended to be morally didactic, instructing the visitor, rather it should encourage him or her to think for themselves in line with the Topography's broader aims. To this end the exhibition had to include a variety of perspectives, not only those of the protesters and detainees, but also of members of the regime.

Whilst the exhibition understandably fits with the Topography's broader aims, it also indicates an attempt to adopt a more critically interpretative stance over the events in Rosenstraße. Specifically Camphausen aimed to demythologise the protest. She described it as a popular myth that had become instrumentalised to exaggerate the historical importance of opposition and resistance. The exhibition provided an opportunity to write a factually correct history; it served as a corrective to the existing memorials. Two issues were prevalent in this process. Firstly, there was the use of the term 'Frauenprotest'. Camphausen felt it was too reductive and generalised a term, one which could convey neither the events nor the protesters' courage, and was moreover too similar to the contemporary term Frauen-Power. Consequently, the exhibition refers to the gender-neutral 'Protest in der Rosenstraße'. Secondly, she aimed to separate out the events so as to distinguish between the civic courage of those involved and their impact; she believed that whilst the protest had consequences it did not cause the regime to release the detainees.⁶⁴⁷ Camphausen argued that the protest was neither political resistance nor an organised demonstration; the motives were purely private and familial.⁶⁴⁸ A shift is apparent away from the then dominant perspective in which the protest was deemed a success: her separation of appreciation of civic courage from assessment of its practical consequences corresponded to a development in

⁶⁴⁵ This last point was rendered superfluous with the installation of the memorial plaque, which drew attention to Hunzinger's sculpture.

⁶⁴⁶ Interview, Camphausen.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Camphausen, G., 1999. Inhaltliche Übersicht zur Materialauswahl für die Dokumentationssäulen in der Rosenstraße. Unpublished document from the Projekt Rosenstraße file.

historiographical studies. By emphasising the protest's existence rather than its success, the exhibition enabled a more discerning, and less emotionalised engagement with the events.

iv) Realising the Aims Through the Form

How then did the form the exhibition took facilitate the realisation of the stated aims, and how is the visitor invited to engage with it?

Advertising columns have been a feature of urban life in Germany since the nineteenth century. Invented by the German printer Ernst Litfaß in 1854, advertising columns have been a feature of the urban landscape since 1855 and are traditionally used to display poster-sized adverts for the theatre, cinema, and concerts; advertising columns are a common site throughout Germany. They are thus familiar enough to blend into the contemporary urban landscape, yet distinct enough to provoke the passerby into a conscious awareness of their difference, to make them think and question why these columns are dissimilar to the majority. Authenticity was key in the choice of advertising column; it was to replicate the column that stood in Rosenstraße at the time of the protest. The content overview in the project file states:

Die geplanten Litfaßsäulen werden sich in ihrer grafischen Gestaltung eindeutig von üblichen Werbesäulen absetzen. Sie werden also Dokumentationssäulen mit ausgewählten historischen Text- und Bilddokumenten versehen, die wesentliche Aspekte der sogenannten Fabrikaktion des NS-Regimes und des Protestes in der Rosenstraße [...] beleuchten.⁶⁴⁹

Jennifer Jordan has criticised that from a distance passers-by would likely assume that the advertising columns simply held the “the usual notices for upcoming concerts or movies”.⁶⁵⁰ Even if this is the case, which seems unlikely given the differences between historic and contemporary columns in terms of size and material, it is precisely their very ordinariness that jars with the everyday, providing shock and reinforcing the notion of the open wound, through which the past is brought into present. Moreover, the design is evocative of the past and the graphic concept alludes to the historical

⁶⁴⁹ Camphausen, Inhaltliche Übersicht zur Materialauswahl.

⁶⁵⁰ Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, p.120.

period it documents. The use of colour creates a clear visual allusion to the past, the deep red a similar shade to that of the Nazi flag, its all-encompassing presence literally enveloping the column as if a flag had been wrapped around it, in a metaphor for the omnipresence of the Nazi past in collective memory. Added to this is the allusion created by the use of the three headings, single lines of text mounted on thin black strips, as if they were three arms of a swastika that had been severed and dislocated from their original position, visually signifying destruction wrought by and as a consequence of the regime, but also the presence of opposition, defeating the regime, indicating that the destroyer has been destroyed.



Figure 22 The three headings on the column



Figure 23 Pisarek's image of the Jewish Community Building

In addition, there are subtle visual allusions to the present-past relationship and to authenticity in the use once again of Abraham Pisarek's photograph. This shows the existence of two identical advertising columns, one in the bottom right hand side of the photograph and another positioned just outside the Jewish Community Building. Incorporating these photographed columns within the column provides a means of ratifying their existence, lending the current columns authenticity, since the viewer can see that they are historically accurate in terms of their form. Simultaneously it provides a visual reference to absence and loss, reminding the visitor of what once existed; it evokes the past and provokes the passer-by into reflecting on it.

The form of the exhibition also determines how the visitor engages with it. Thomas Haakenson has drawn attention to the way in which memorials "create an aesthetic experience" in which the viewer is invited to "interact physically with the memorial,"⁶⁵¹

⁶⁵¹ Haakenson. T. O., 2010. '(In)Visible Trauma: Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset's Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Socialist Regime'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 146-156, here p.148 and p.152.

whilst Chloe Paver argues that an exhibition's form requires the "embodied viewer to move in relation to what is displayed".⁶⁵² Whether viewers come across the columns by chance or set out to visit them, they have to choose for themselves how to engage with them, where to start from, what to read (if anything at all), in what order, and where to stop. The visitor literally has to move around the exhibition, completing a circumference of the column in order to see it all.

Given the exhibition's form there is no clearly defined beginning or end; neither the texts nor images are numbered so there is no suggested order. Although one text could be said to serve as an introduction of sorts, summarising the events, there is nothing to indicate that it provides the starting point from which to proceed. Its positioning in the centre of the column, surrounded by other texts and images, undermines the idea of this text as the starting point. The exhibition content is intentionally non-sequential; the texts and images are pasted at differing heights around the advertising column, and thus hinder a traditional reading from left to right, which would have otherwise indicated that the exhibition guided the visitor towards a particular conclusion. The organisation of the content deliberately belies a singular, fixed interpretation. The effect is that no one view is allowed to dominate, that there is no set beginning or end. This is a reference perhaps to the need for continual confrontation with the Nazi past. It is also disorientating, creating a sense of uncertainty so as to reflect the uncertainty experienced by those actually involved in the events, as well as the uncertainty over the protest's impact.

Although the form contributes to the viewer's response, their interpretation is also affected by the exhibition content, by what has been included and excluded. In addition to the texts that have been included, the Topography intended to include copies of two release papers.⁶⁵³ These were eventually left out, perhaps due to spatial constraints, but more likely because of the potential implications for interpretation. The papers showed release dates over a week apart, with the second one dated a week after the protest had concluded. Whilst the Topography aimed to confront the public with the limited nature of the protest's success, they nevertheless wanted to maintain the importance of civic

⁶⁵² Paver, 'From Monuments to Installations', p.253.

⁶⁵³ Camphausen, G., 1999. *Titel und Texte für Litfaßsäule Rosenstraße* Unpublished file notes, 26 January.

courage. The release date on the second paper might have led the visitor to speculate whether the protest had had any impact at all, which would have been at odds with the main ideas the exhibition attempted to convey.

v) **Exhibition Content Analysis**

The three headings on the columns mentioned above (*Protest gegen NS Terror – Rosenstraße 1943*, *Die Ausnahme – Rosenstraße 1943*, and *Frauen protestierten – Rosenstraße 1943*) are eye-catching, written in white font on a black background. They frame the exhibition, informing the visitor as to what the exhibition examines, helping to keep him or her focused. Emphasising that the protest was ‘the exception’ and that ‘women protested’ may initially seem emotive, encouraging identification with the protesters rather than serving the Topography’s objective to foster critical engagement. Yet, it serves as a pointed reminder of the lack of opposition. The headings also discourage an emotional identification by remaining relatively neutral. Unlike the inscription on Hunzinger’s sculpture, the headings offer no ethnic/religious coding. They emphasise that the protest took place, and that women protested, without stating whether they were Jewish or non-Jewish or even whether they were intermarried. The visitor, whilst perhaps drawn in and guided by the headings, has to discover the details for him or herself.

Like the headings, further explanatory texts are written in white font on a black background. We find these on the photographs, and in explanatory text mentioned above.⁶⁵⁴ The text reads:

Am 27. Februar 1943 leiteten die Nationalsozialisten mit einer großen Verhaftungsaktion die Deportation aller noch im Reichsgebiet befindlichen nichtprivilegierten deutschen Juden und die Erfassung der als „Mischlinge“ und in „Mischehe“ lebenden Juden ein. In Berlin wurden im Zuge der sogenannten Fabrikaktion ungefähr 10.000 Juden, die nicht unter einer der Ausnahmekategorien der Nationalsozialisten fielen, verhaftet und in vier Sammellagern (das Konzerthaus Clou, die Synagoge Levetzowstraße, und

⁶⁵⁴ In the original online version of the exhibition each document was numerated, and this text was document 1, the introduction.

zwei Kasernen) interniert. Bis zum 6. März wurden nahezu 7.000 von ihnen in das Vernichtungslager Auschwitz deportiert.

Die bei der Fabrik-Aktion verhafteten „Mischlinge“ oder in „Mischehe“ lebenden Juden, die aufgrund ihres Status nicht in diese Deportationen eingeschlossen waren, wurden zu einem großen Teil in einem Gebäude der Jüdischen Gemeinde in der Rosenstraße 2-4 und in dem Jüdischen Altersheim in der Großen Hamburger Straße 26 festgehalten. In einer für die NS-Zeit beispiellosen öffentlichen Aktion protestierten Hunderte von nichtjüdischen Angehörigen, zumeist Ehefrauen der verhafteten jüdischen Zwangsarbeiter, tagelang vor der Rosenstraße 2-4 und forderten die Freilassung ihrer Familienangehörigen. Am 6. März 1943 wurden die festgehaltenen Juden aus der Haft entlassen.

Die nicht deportierten „geschützten“ Juden lebten bis Kriegsende in zunehmender Isolation und unter ständiger Bedrohung. Die Anfang 1945 vom Reichssicherheitshauptamt geplante Deportation aller „Mischlinge“ und in „Mischehe“ Lebenden nach Theresienstadt wurde durch den Vormarsch der Alliierten verhindert.

Insgesamt wurden über 50.500 Juden aus Berlin in die von Deutschland besetzten Gebiete im Osten deportiert, davon über zwei Drittel in die Vernichtungslager in Polen, Weißrußland und im Baltikum.

Here the events are located within the wider narrative of the Holocaust so as to reinforce the exceptionality of the protest, but also the greater lack of opposition to it. Moreover, the fact is emphasised that in the midst of the protest, a far greater number of Jewish victims were deported; the opening sentence stresses that the people for whom the protest was held were a very specific subset of Nazism's primary victim group. This allows the visitor to see Nazi society as one with a great deal of internal variation.⁶⁵⁵ Thus, whilst the protest is acknowledged here, it is framed with acknowledgement of the greater loss and of German guilt. It shifts away from an heroic interpretation of the events by emphasising firstly that the group were not amongst those to be deported, and secondly that intermarried and partial Jews lived in increasing isolation and remained at risk, playing down the lasting political impact of the protest on the regime's policy.

⁶⁵⁵ Till, *The New Berlin*, p.131.

Whilst the text acknowledges and honours this act of non-Jewish opposition, it ensures that memory of Nazism's victims is prioritised.

In addition to the explanatory text, the events are represented from a variety of different vantage points. A pattern emerges, for example, in the testimonies displayed in the exhibition.⁶⁵⁶ The testimonies included here can be grouped into three categories. The first suggests the existence of widespread solidarity, whilst implying that intermarried Germans could provide the most effective opposition to Jewish persecution, a proposition paralleled in the historical interpretations illustrated by Stoltzfus et al. discussed in Chapter 2; the second category emphasises the opposition of intermarried Germans within wider trends of opposition, albeit from the perpetrator perspective, whilst the third contrasts the fates of those in Jewish and mixed Judeo-Christian marriages.

Three testimonies fall into the first category and all depict scenes of open confrontation. The first of these is an extract from Hans Grossmann's testimony.⁶⁵⁷ This suggests a heroic effort by the women to physically block the convoy; it is the women, and only the women who take action, whilst others namely policemen and members of the SS look on, inactively. The testimony of protester Charlotte Israel similarly indicates a range of different acts of solidarity amongst Berliners, whilst placing the greater emphasis on the protesters' increasing defiance and their steadfastness when threatened with violence.⁶⁵⁸ Yet, it is simultaneously at odds with the Topography's aims in so far as it lends itself to pathos and heroisation, arguably placing a greater emphasis on the protesters rather than those for whom they were protesting. This presents the visitor with an idealised but problematic interpretation, which aligns the protesters and detainees as suffering equally, negating the causes and differences between their experiences.

The excerpt from the diary of Ruth Andreas-Friedrich, a non-Jewish journalist and co-founding member of the resistance group Onkel Emil, highlights and contrasts the

⁶⁵⁶ Interview, Camphausen. She stated that the use of testimony in an exhibition provides a means of accessing history, that by removing the anonymity of an event, in this case the protest, it can be better conveyed.

⁶⁵⁷ In spite of the claims to the importance of accuracy, the fictional testimony, which we saw in Chapter 3, is represented here as a factual account, detailing arrest, transfer to and arrival at Rosenstraße.

⁶⁵⁸ Ehmann, A., et al, 1993. *Die Grunewald-Rampe*. Berlin: Edition Colloquium, p. 147.

efficacy of opposition to Jewish persecution by intermarried Germans with that staged by other Germans. Recalling the first day of the Factory Action, she lists acquaintances amongst the deported and draws attention to the existence of solidarity, but also to its limitations. Whilst she can aid her Jewish friends, she is unable to prevent their deportation. This contrasts starkly with her account of the protest: “At Rosenstraße the women rebel. They threateningly demand their husbands’ release [...] Anyone who had the good fortune to have married a non-Jewish partner was allowed to pack his bags and go home.”⁶⁵⁹ The use of this extract is intriguing, particularly as it seems to endorse the very perspective the exhibition intended to call into question.⁶⁶⁰ Yet, even as it suggests that the opposition of intermarried Germans was superior, the remainder of the extract qualifies it, so as to illustrate that although the protest may have had a political impact on one level or another, it was not political resistance. Camphausen has indicated that she wanted to emphasise the historical context in which the events took place.⁶⁶¹ In order to achieve this, the excerpt also contains references to plans for an unspecified military coup and to the White Rose group, so as to differentiate between these acts and the protest, between resistance proper and personally motivated dissent.

The exhibition also gives voice to the perpetrator perspective, citing often-quoted extracts from Goebbels’ diary relating to the period of the Factory Action. Unsurprisingly, the diary entry lambastes the solidarity demonstrated with Jewish Germans, and whilst it remarks on the arrest of intermarried German Jews, it also alludes to widespread subversion of the regime, enabling 4,000 German Jews to flee ahead of the Factory Action. Moreover, it implies that recapturing them was Goebbels’ primary concern. Whilst his disdain for intermarriage is apparent, he dismisses the reaction to the arrest of intermarried German Jews, remarking that at the current time he cannot give it undue consideration. The use of Goebbels’ diary entry, more commonly used to imply the protest was a success, thus here serves to undermine that idea. Using the perpetrator perspective not only adds to the variety of perspectives in line with the memorial strategy, it also raises doubts about the protest’s impact, engendering more questions in the visitor’s mind than it can offer answers to.

⁶⁵⁹ Andreas-Friedrich, R., 1947. *Der Schattenmann. Tagebuchaufzeichnungen 1938-1945*. Frankfurt.a.M: Suhrkamp, pp. 108-110. My translation.

⁶⁶⁰ Gruner, *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße*, pp.20-21. Gruner argued that Andreas-Friedrich’s account not only closely paralleled Zivier’s from 1945 but also helped to engender the notion of a successful protest, which forced the regime to concede.

⁶⁶¹ Interview, Camphausen.

The majority of eyewitness testimonies in the exhibition are notable for their emphasis on the actions of the protesters, diverting attention away from the experiences of those for whom they were protesting. However, the testimony of Siegfried Cohn, an intermarried German Jew and Rosenstraße detainee, falls into the third category, which shifts attention towards the detainees. Cohn's testimony makes no mention of the protest, rather it focuses on the beginning of the Factory Action, how his colleague tried to warn him the Gestapo had arrived, through to his arrest with approximately 200 others, and his eventual transfer to Rosenstraße. In a further contrast with the above-mentioned accounts, Cohn's testimony indicates that from the outset a different fate was intended for them, irrespective of the protest that followed their arrest. He recounts:

Dort werden die in Mischehen Lebenden von den in volljüdischen Lebenden getrennt. Wir, die in Mischehe Lebenden, bekommen einen weißen Zettel umgehängt, während die in volljüdischer Ehe von dort aus gleich den Weg in das Konzentrationslager anzutreten haben. Wir, mit Karten markierten, werden wieder auf Lastautos geladen und von dort nach der Rosenstraße befördert.⁶⁶²

Cohn's account thus reinforces the idea of the fates of and intentions towards intermarried Jewish Germans being different from those of the wider victim group. It is the existence of intermarriages which is the overriding factor in Cohn's and his fellow detainees' survival. This downplays the latent heroisation of the protesters in the above-mentioned extracts, and focuses the visitor on two things: firstly, the significance of intermarriage rather than public demonstration as a means of survival, and secondly Jewish suffering, the human suffering inflicted on the detainees, and the fate of the majority who were deported, rather than feel-good notions of solidarity and opposition.

Whilst testimonies provide an important part of the exhibition's content, lending a sense of authenticity and of accuracy, as we have already seen in other representations, they are insufficient on their own and are supplemented with a number of other official documents relating to the Factory Action. Following a similar pattern to that of the other memorials in Rosenstraße, the exhibition does not detach the events from their

⁶⁶² Siegfried Cohn, cited in: Benz, W., 1988. *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933-1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft*. Munich; C.H.Beck, p.593.

wider context, an approach that is facilitated by the inclusion of these documents, which are interspersed with the testimonies so that no sooner may the visitor draw one conclusion that the next document places it under scrutiny. Caroline Pearce argues that the approach is used “in order to strike home the reality of Nazi criminality”.⁶⁶³ Each of the Nazi documents also jolts the visitor by using banal bureaucratic language and terms to describe deportation and mass murder, the reality of which is reinforced through the names on the transport lists and the police log book, recalling a minuscule proportion of the victims from anonymity, and prompting the visitor to reflect on the reality of the Holocaust.

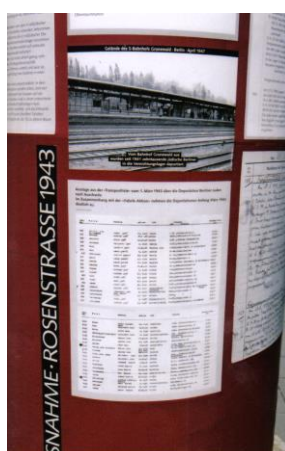


Figure 24 Close-up of the deportation lists and photograph of Grunewald station

Nazi criminality is further reinforced through the use of photographs. The exhibition makes use of six images, the largest of which is Pisarek’s photograph of Rosenstraße. This is accompanied by an image of the Jewish Old People’s Home on Große Hamburger Straße, an image of the synagogue at Levetzowstraße in the Tiergarten, and a postcard image of the concert house ‘Clou’, all of which served as deportation centres. In addition the exhibition includes images of the stations at Putlitzstraße and Grunewald from which the deportees were transported to Auschwitz.⁶⁶⁴ These photographs are significant on a number of levels. As I suggested earlier, they provide an ‘evidential force’, at least in so far as they appear to ratify the existence of certain locations,⁶⁶⁵ but what they represent is determined by the context in which they are

⁶⁶³ Pearce, ‘The Role of German Perpetrator Sites’, p.169. Interview, Camphausen.

⁶⁶⁴ The first three images were taken by photographer and Rosenstraße detainee Abraham Pisarek. Whilst the images of Rosenstraße, Große Hamburger Straße and the Concert House, Clou pre-date the war, the images of the Levetzowstraße synagogue and the two stations were taken in 1947.

⁶⁶⁵ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.89.

used. Each photograph has a small accompanying caption, identifying the location and its relevance for the visitor.

Some of the locations still exist today, whilst the others are no longer visible. Hence the pictures denote both absence and presence. The images, largely devoid of human life, encourage the visitor to reflect on the people who were once present at these locations, but who are now absent.⁶⁶⁶ The images of the two stations, with the train tracks running into the distance, are a particularly poignant means of evoking loss, suffering, displacement, and guilt. The stations are empty, providing a visual metaphor for the haunting absence of Jewish life, and a critical reminder of culpability. This is heightened through the positioning of these photographs in proximity to the transport lists and police logbook, personalising Nazi criminality. As the visitor contemplates these images, he or she is unable to avoid considering the lives of the people identified, who inevitably passed over the tracks in the pictures.

vi) Concluding Observations on the Rosenstraße exhibition

In keeping with the Topography of Terror's approach at the time of its installation, the Rosenstraße exhibition set out to question the status quo. It helped to engender public awareness of the protest, and of the diversity of the German-Jewish relationship, but it also challenged the then dominant perception of the impact of the protest.

The use of advertising columns as mounts for the exhibition can be read in several ways: it literally advertises the events and their remembrance, and draws public attention to German guilt and responsibility, attracting readers with a familiarity of the medium, only to then shock them. It deliberately confounds one-dimensional interpretations of the past through its physical form, the way in which the visitor interacts with it, and its content. It does not impose meaning, but rather democratises remembering, by making the past freely accessible in a public space, and giving the visitor the freedom to choose for themselves whether or not to engage with remembering and how. Chloe Paver argues that, "today's exhibition makers often seek

⁶⁶⁶ The exception here is the image of Rosenstraße, although notably the people are not posed in the photograph, rather they have been captured in passing.

to provoke the visitor rather than to provide a stable framework for interpretation.”⁶⁶⁷
This holds true of the Rosenstraße exhibition.

Whilst the exhibition is open to multiple interpretations it is also undeniably dated. As we saw in Chapter 2, there have been significant developments in historiography and in attitudes towards the protest since 2000. It is likely that the exhibition will be re-evaluated at some point in the future; to an extent this process has already begun with the protest’s inclusion in the Topography’s main exhibition at Niederkirchenerstraße. This illustrates the interplay between memorialisation and historiographical trends, showing how the shift away from the notion of the protest is also reflected in the latest memorial development.

vii) Integrating Rosenstraße into the Topography’s Main Exhibition

In 2010 the Topography of Terror re-opened with a new documentation centre and open-air exhibition. It is beyond the remit of this chapter to analyse the exhibition in its entirety; remarks in the following are limited to its inclusion of the Factory Action and Rosenstraße protest. This introduced a shift in patterns of the protest’s memorial representation towards separating the events out from each other, not so as to deny the protest, but to prevent the protest and the release of the detainees from overshadowing the deportation of thousands of other German Jews.

The new open-air exhibition has been mounted onto a number of individual glass information boards onto which texts and images have been superimposed. Beneath each is a freestanding unit, containing audio-recordings of interviews, accompanied by written transcripts in German and in English. The Factory Action is relayed through the experiences of the Weigert family: both the father and daughter were detained in Rosenstraße, whilst the son escaped and the mother protested. Once again Pisarek’s image of the Jewish Community Building has been used, accompanied by family snapshots of the Weigerts. The transcripts are also accompanied by contemporary photographs of the Weigert siblings as elderly people.

⁶⁶⁷ Paver, ‘From Monuments to Installations’, p.262.



Figure 25 The Section on the Factory Action



Figure 26 One of the pull-out sections of the exhibition

The aforementioned shift is apparent in the description accompanying Pisarek's photograph. The text reads:

Verwaltungsgebäude der jüdischen Gemeinde, Rosenstraße 2-4, um 1935. In der „Fabrikaktion“ am 27. Februar 1943 nahm die Gestapo über 8.000 noch in Berlin lebende Juden fest. Lediglich diejenigen, die in so genannten deutsch-jüdischen Ehen lebten, wurden ausgenommen und in der Rosenstraße inhaftiert. Alle Übrigen wurden deportiert.⁶⁶⁸

In this brief paragraph the deportation of the majority is the central focus. Whilst it acknowledges that 8,000 were arrested, it does not give a figure or the proportion who were not deported, so as not to detract from those who were. In addition, the text emphasises the distinction between those in inter-faith marriages and the majority. Rather than inferring they were all to be subjected to the same measures, this explicitly states that intermarried individuals were detained separately, indicating that the regime's intentions were different. That they survived is implicit in the final sentence, but significantly, it does not suggest that they were rescued or released because of the protest. Whilst the exhibition may not overtly support any one particular interpretation, it does implicitly reject the idea that the protest brought about the release of the detainees.

In the remaining texts, relatively little attention is given to the protest. Gisela Weigert's testimony recalls hearing the protest outside, but frames it with her experience of arrest and detention. The text accompanying Hertha Weigert's photograph notes that she

⁶⁶⁸ Steur, C., and Kutzner, M., eds., 2010. *Berlin 1933 – 1945 Zwischen Propaganda und Terror*. Berlin: Stiftung Topographie des Terrors, p.138.

protested daily with other women against the arrest of her relatives, and this was the only public protest of its kind during the Third Reich. It emphasises that the protest was against their arrest, but does not explicitly state that it was against their feared deportation, nor does it make claims that the protest was the only one against the Holocaust, as earlier accounts described it. Rather in line with Camphausen's earlier intentions, it emphasises that the protest was a personal and familial act rather than a political undertaking. If the inclusion of the protest in the open-air exhibition in Niederkirchenerstraße is any indication of how the Topography may update the Rosenstraße exhibition, we may speculate that this will take an increasingly expository stance in line with the current historiographical trends, but one in which the Topography also shifts from its earlier position (in which it challenged dominant remembering), to one that reinforces the new hegemonic interpretation, i.e. reflecting a desire to integrate a memory of the events, in which Jewish suffering is emphasised above the act of protest.

4. Rosenstraße as an Urban Palimpsest

So far I have focused on Rosenstraße as an authentic site of memory. However, it is also important to consider the street itself and how it in turn may reflect competing tensions, patterns and desires. This section offers an interpretation of the palimpsestic nature of Rosenstraße, arguing that whilst it is emblematic of the competing memory trends of recent years, and attempts to keep visible traces of the Nazi past and the genocide of the Jews present, it also indicates a desire to draw public attention to earlier periods of German and Prussian history. Andreas Huyssen's notion of the urban palimpsest is particularly useful here. Traditionally a palimpsest denotes the idea of writing over writing, a superimposition of new on the old, whose traces are still visible. Huyssen applies the term in an urban, architectural and memorial context, arguing that "literary techniques of reading historically, intertextually, constructively and deconstructively at the same time can be woven into our understanding of urban spaces that shape collective imaginaries."⁶⁶⁹ He described Berlin as a "city text frantically being written and rewritten," suggesting "the city has become something like a prism through which we can focus issues of contemporary urbanism and architecture, national identity and statehood, historical memory and forgetting," and which is "deeply

⁶⁶⁹ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p.7.

invested in the shaping of political and national identities.”⁶⁷⁰ If Berlin can be considered a prism, it follows that one of its streets can also be regarded as such.



Figure 27 Rosenstraße, May 2004



Figure 28 Rosenstraße, October 2010

Rosenstraße has been in existence for centuries, acquiring its present name in the 17th century.⁶⁷¹ It once ran from Neue Friedrichstraße in the north, and ended directly opposite the Marienkirche, but has since been substantially shortened at the southern end to accommodate the urban regeneration around Karl Liebknecht Straße; the only remaining pre-war building is the hotel at Rosenstraße 1. The street was substantially rebuilt throughout the 1990s. Hotel owner Wolfgang Looch retained the original structural style of the building, whilst he had the neighbouring office block at Rosenstraße 2-4 rebuilt in a distinctly contemporary, glass fronted style, distinct from its previous incarnation. The use of glass is symbolic on a number of levels. It showcases modern architectural techniques, but it also offers up connotations of transparency and openness, in contrast to its function in 1943 as a place of imprisonment.

It arguably also plays on notions of reflection – both on the past and through the building. Although the office block at 2-4 is new, in its windows the buildings opposite are reflected, and they can be gazed upon from the inside, depending on the viewer perspective. The buildings on the opposite (eastern) side were also rebuilt in the 1990s, replicating their 19th century counterparts, which dated from 1895-1896.⁶⁷² On the western side the real estate plots for houses 2-4 had been in the ownership of the Jewish

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid., p.49.

⁶⁷¹ It was previously named Hurengasse but the name was changed as part of the gentrification of the area in the 17th century. See: Gruner, *Gedenkort Rosenstraße*, p.10; Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.12.

⁶⁷² Jochheim, *Frauenprotest in der Rosenstraße*, p.14

Community since the 1830s: an administrative building had been established shortly thereafter, and was re-modelled in 1905. Though it no longer exists, traces of that past, or at least allusions to it, are visible through the regeneration of the eastern side of the street and its reflection in the glass frontage of Rosenstraße 2-4, providing a metaphor for the constant interplay of the past and present in the street and in collective imaginaries.

The architecture deliberately evokes the city's older, Prussian heritage. Bill Niven has identified a trend of "re-Prussianization" in German memorialisation, speculating that it may be evidence of a desire to "focus public attention, and German national identity, on pre-1914 traditions – before, as it were, everything went terribly wrong."⁶⁷³ We can see the reclaiming of this older heritage in the architectural styles adopted in Rosenstraße, and also find further re-Prussianization in the area immediately around Rosenstraße. What was once Neue Friedrichstraße to the north of Rosenstraße has not only been reconstructed but also re-named Anna-Louise Karsch Straße, evoking its 18th-century past. Anna-Louise Karsch, née Dürbach (1722-1791), was a German poet, respected by prominent figures of her era, including Goethe, Friedrich II of Prussia, and perhaps most significantly Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), the Jewish philosopher and founder of Haskalah. Haskalah the Jewish enlightenment intellectual movement that aimed to "create a secular social domain in which Jews could engage in critical thought and work", contributed significantly to 18th-century Berlin's position as a hub of intellectualism, renowned for fine arts, publishing, science and education in Europe.⁶⁷⁴ Berlin today can look back with some pride on a time when Prussia was the most progressive of the German states, its 1812 edict having given Jews the status of "native residents and Prussian citizens".⁶⁷⁵

It is unsurprising that this historical period has been evoked, since it is so much less tainted by anti-Semitism than the late 19th and early to mid twentieth centuries. The enlightenment ideal of equality and the notion of the German-Jewish cultural symbiosis are a part of Germany's heritage which resonates with current political values. Evoking

⁶⁷³ Niven, B., 2010 'The Legacy of Second German Empire Memorials after 1945'. In: B. Niven and C. Paver, eds. *Memorialisation in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.399-408, here pp.405-406.

⁶⁷⁴ Meyer, M. A., *German Jewish History in Modern Times 1600 – 1945. A Brochure by the Leo Baeck Institute*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.11-12.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., p.18.

this earlier period in time bespeaks a desire for a positive focus and an identity less compromised by excesses of nationalism; it may also indicate a desire to focus identity not on the achievements of the nation, but on those of the individual state, and promote the region as a positive source of identity. Bill Niven has written of links with the rediscovery of German victimhood, which has helped Germans to overcome a sense of shame.⁶⁷⁶ Yet re-Prussianisation can be seen less as an attempt to sideline the National Socialist past than as one to look back further precisely because of it, in order to understand where Germany went wrong.

Whilst this Prussianization is prominent in the street and its architecture, to the point that it appears to dominate physically, it is not the only past of which traces are visible. The recent GDR past is still discernible in and around Rosenstraße, and even we may suggest to an extent in Hunzinger's memorial sculpture. GDR architecture effectively frames the street to the south, with blandly functional 1970s high-rise flats in the southwest corner, and Karl Liebknecht Straße to the south with further high-rise flats, and a shopping complex below. In the memorial sculpture, the arms and hands of many of the figures are exaggeratedly large, as if echoing the symbolisation of the physical strength and power of the worker in socialist depictions of the proletariat. Rosenstraße itself is overlooked by the nearby Fernsehturm (TV Tower), an iconic symbol of the GDR. The traces of the German-Jewish enlightenment and the Third Reich are thus overlaid by other, more recent ones.

Multiple reminders of the street's Jewish and Nazi pasts, which are irrevocably tied to one another, are present as much in absences and voids in the cityscape as in its memorials. The memorials also draw attention to the street's voids. The Jewish Community Building, for example, is detectable in the images of it reproduced on the memorial plaque and in the exhibition. Likewise the absence of Berlin's oldest synagogue on the corner of Rosenstraße/ Heidereutergasse is conveyed by a void between buildings, which is now a green space. In 2000 the foundations of the synagogue were excavated so that the building's absence and the reason for its destruction are discernible: their significance is explained through an explanatory plaque. This describes the history of the synagogue from the late 17th century to the

⁶⁷⁶ Niven, 'Second German Empire Memorials', p.406.

present day in four languages: German, French, English and Russian – a seeming nod towards the post-war era, when these were the languages of Germany's occupiers. The excavation of the synagogue foundations may be interpreted as a deliberate attempt to anchor the street to its long Jewish tradition, but also shows a readiness to remember its destruction, and to keep the Nazi past prominent.



Figure 29 The foundations of the old synagogue



Figure 30 The accompanying explanatory board

Rosenstraße as an urban palimpsest is then a complicated city text in which different narratives are interwoven. It is emblematic of the conflicted nature of remembering and identity construction in that it reflects the obligation to acknowledge and to atone, a willingness to anchor the Nazi past as the negative other of contemporary notions of identity on the one hand, and on the other a desire for a positive historical legacy.

5. Chapter Conclusions

If, as Andreas Huyssen has argued,⁶⁷⁷ there is a need to anchor our memories of the past in order to construct a sense of identity and nurture a vision of the future, and this is shaped by public spaces including the museum, memorial and monument, what does the collection of memorials, along with Rosenstraße itself indicate about the memories, sense of identity and future vision constructed within that space?

At first glance it is possible to see the volume of memorials as a reflection of the willingness to integrate memories of the protest and of Jewish suffering into the cityscape, which was also in line with broader trends in memorialisation. However, it

⁶⁷⁷ Huyssen, A., 1995. *Twilight Memories. Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. London & New York: Routledge, p.249.

should not be assumed that this willingness meant that the realisation of memorial projects would be straightforward: this was particularly evident in Hunzinger's case. Once the sculpture had been installed, however, its presence helped to engender further projects. In spite of the initial argument that the sculpture needed explaining, this chapter has found that there are more commonalities than may first be assumed. Moreover, all of the memorials serve to jolt the passerby out of complacency, to confront them with the past but leave them with the choice of whether or not to engage with the past that they represent.

I do not wish to suggest, however, that this chapter has offered a definitive reading of the memorials, or that there is one to be found. The sculpture, plaque and exhibitions are open to interpretation, and specialised knowledge is not necessarily required. Whilst the memorials mark and draw attention to the events, they do not impose meaning, leaving the visitor to judge for him or herself.

At the same time it is helpful to see the unfolding memorialisation as a microcosm of the wider patterns of remembering of the Rosenstraße protest. It has, at every level, involved several memorial entrepreneurs whose work we have already examined in this thesis, whether directly or indirectly. Gernot Jochheim has been particularly instrumental in bringing about the temporary exhibitions, for instance, and for using the second edition of his popular history as a platform through which to draw attention to the struggle Hunzinger faced. He also acted in an advisory capacity to the Topography of Terror in the planning stages of their exhibition, and his work is also cited within it. Nathan Stoltzfus' work provided the impetus for the temporary exhibition, whilst Wolf Gruner's most recent publication has contributed to the Topography's on-going efforts to memorialise the protest. In the memorials themselves shifting patterns and values can be found. At first glance Hunzinger's memorial sculpture appears to honour the protest and mourn Jewish suffering, although a closer reading indicates it is more complex. As memorialisation has developed it has taken an increasingly detached and dispassionate stance. The latest memorial developments reflect and may also reinforce the turn towards a critical interpretation of the events, and the re-centralisation of the Jewish victim in the narrative.

The memorials, individually and collectively, are illuminating. They are indicative of the willingness of the German public to confront the Nazi past and integrate the events in Rosenstraße into collective understanding. They are also part of the urban palimpsest. Whilst they seek to inspire critical reflection, reminding viewers of German guilt as much as of the protest and the suffering of the Jews, the re-Prussianization of the street indicates a desire to move further back beyond the Third Reich to a comparatively better time in order to promote a more positive sense of identity. This highlights the tensions and conflicts in German memory politics (both generally and in relation to Rosenstraße) between the obligation to remember National Socialism, its crimes and the limited opposition to it, and the desire to construct a positive identity. In pursuit of the latter, Germans have begun to look back to suitable regional and state rather than national traditions.

Chapter 7

Reflections on the Dynamics of German Remembering: Concluding Observations and Suggestions for Future Research

1. Summary and Interpretation of Findings

This thesis has examined the historical debates surrounding the Rosenstraße protest and cultural representations of it since 1990. Drawing together different strands of memory work, it has attempted to advance existing knowledge of the significance of Rosenstraße for German collective memory and national self-understanding, and to throw light on both patterns of identity construction and the interrelation between the different media of memory. It has sought to augment existing work in cultural memory theory by showing how both memory and identity are socially constructed, and exploring how and why these change, and in relation to what, through comparative analysis of textual, filmic and physical media of memory (e.g. in the form of memorials).

Chapter 1 set the parameters for the study, challenging assumptions about the protest. It argued that, although the Rosenstraße protest had not played a major part in German collective memory until recently, the suggestion that it had been either neglected or repressed was unfounded. The historical events of 1943 had in fact featured sporadically since the end of the Second World War in a range of memoirs and biographies and in the press. They had gradually begun to gain currency in the 1980s as a result of shifts towards remembering the Holocaust in West Germany and the GDR, as well as attempts to remember a broader range of opposition to Nazism. The Rosenstraße protest was thus already a feature of German cultural memory prior to 1990. The Rosenstraße protest has, however, been remembered more since unification, which prompts the question why it became a prominent feature of cultural memory in this period. As this chapter argued, in the post-unification period the narrative resonated increasingly with the public, as Germans reconsidered their past with a greater intensity than at any time before. The Rosenstraße narrative acquired a new relevance at the beginning of the 1990s because it cast Germans in an appealing, and positive light. It could be appropriated as an example of positive German-Jewish unity and provided an

aspirational model for identity construction. By the later part of the decade it could be used to counter claims of uniform German anti-Semitism, whilst in the post-millennium era it could be used to legitimate claims to German victimhood and suffering, however problematic.

Chapter 2 explored the historical debate surrounding the Rosenstraße protest, and its dynamics; the broader framing context was analysed as well as the linkage between this particular narrative and shifting conceptions of resistance and identity. This underlined the political and moral dimensions of engagement with the Nazi past and the implicit correlation between history, identity and self-perception in relation to that past. Historical debate was shown to be determined by the competing desires of specific groups, namely those who advocated revisionism and those who, conversely, rejected the idea of historicization, of treating the period as any other, in order to maintain awareness of accountability, and to prevent Jewish victimhood from being displaced by a focus on non-Jewish suffering. The origins of the controversy which arose in September 2003 lay in the broader resistance discourses of the mid-1990s, which were characterised by commitment towards an inclusive approach to understanding the breadth and diversity of German opposition to Nazism. This first, defining phase of debate, which has been either overlooked or misunderstood and considered, inaccurately, as an indicator of reluctance to engage with the protest, reached an impasse. It needed a shift in focus to the previously ignored question of whether the protest had succeeded in forcing the regime to concede for debate to move forwards. In a second phase from late 2002 onwards, the historical debate intersected with broader discourses on German victimhood and suffering. The question of the protest's success initially appeared linked to the legitimacy of the protesters' claim to victimhood status, with the result that any doubt cast on the protest or indeed on the regime's intentions towards the detainees prompted a backlash against the historian in question. Gradually, however, the idea that the protest had been successful gave way to Wolf Gruner's less acclamatory interpretation of events, and wariness of idealising opposition. The shifts in this historical debate suggest that even though it seemed as if the post-millennial focus on wartime suffering would allow for an idealised and emotionalised identification with the protesters, by questioning assumptions about who could be considered victim, and of what, the very incompatibility of victim groups became more apparent. Consequently, a more differentiated, and arguably less emotionalised

understanding of the Rosenstraße protest has emerged in historiography. Yet, the extent to which this more critical interpretation has become embedded in public imagination remains unclear; this is a question for further research to address, as indicated in the second section of this chapter.

Chapter 3 focused on the popular history *Protest in der Rosenstraße* by Gernot Jochheim, originally published in 1990 as a text for school children and later twice re-published for an adult readership. This text was shown to be significant for the insight it offered into the ideas, concerns and attitudes towards the Nazi past, German-Jewish relationship, and conceptions of ‘self’ and ‘other’ in the first years of unified Germany. Themes which originate in Jochheim’s text including issues of authenticity, generational patterns of remembering amongst members of the second post-war generation, the transgenerational dialogue between members of the first and third generations, German-Jewish unity, resistance and suffering have been perpetuated, to varying degrees, in and through later representations. Whilst Jochheim’s popular history intersected with prominent notions in the early 1990s of identity and resistance, and reflected the fears and concerns over resurgent nationalism, it altered with each publication. Textual changes reflected growing accuracy of historical knowledge, and developments in commemoration. They revealed shifting attitudes towards the protest, and the past more generally, over the course of the twelve years since the popular history’s original publication.

Chapter 4 examined biographical memories in Nina Schröder’s *Hitlers unbeugsame Gegnerinnen: Die Frauen der Rosenstraße*, and explored the intersections between personal and public memories of the events. Memories of the protest proved more diverse than previous representations, such as Jochheim’s, had suggested, and eyewitnesses already called the protest’s success into question before the historical debate examined in Chapter 2. Published at a time of intense debate about German guilt and complicity in the late 1990s after the Goldhagen debate and Crimes of the Wehrmacht Exhibition, Schröder’s text offered an alternative to ideas of uniform German anti-Semitism and Germans as sole perpetrators, yet at the same time it showed a reluctance to acknowledge the responsibility of the ordinary German which went against the grain of broader discourses. This suggested a widening gulf between personal and public memories. Moreover, the text indicated a shift towards discourses

of victimhood and suffering, which preceded the broader shift around the turn of the millennium. It also drew attention to a generational conflict within remembrance of the protest, suggesting that whilst there is openness between members of the first (experiential) and third generations, there is a conflict between members of the second and third generations, in which the latter appear to blame the former for their lack of positive identity.

Chapter 5, which examined von Trotta's 2003 film *Rosenstraße*, included an analysis of the original draft screenplays from 1995 and the changes within the eventual film. It revealed that the extent of social criticism had been reduced, particularly around the subject of complicity and guilt, in favour of promoting notions of suffering, loss, and the potential for future unity. *Rosenstraße* allows the viewer to question notions of identity, promoting hybridity as an ideal. Yet, as Chapter 5 showed, the model it promoted is drawn from various notions of Christian and national identity, despite the film's implication that any purist sense of identity is inherently flawed. Whilst von Trotta's film appeared to follow wider cinematic trends, upon closer inspection it proved more complex, deviating from patterns of heritage filmmaking in Germany as much as it conformed to them. Contradictory and problematic aspects of the film were a reflection of the conflicting interests in generational remembering.

Chapter 6 examined the various memorials dedicated to the protest in *Rosenstraße* (Ingeborg Hunzinger's sculpture, the memorial plaque, and exhibitions both in *Rosenstraße* and in the Topography of Terror's open-air site). The processes and competing agendas through which each memorial was realised were demonstrated, and the significance of the street itself as a site of memory was explored, through which its past, or rather pasts are evoked. Each of the memorials was shown to be intricate and complex on its own; yet also to complement the others, and offer an increasingly complex, contradictory reading, leaving the visitor to draw his or her own conclusions. The focus on *Rosenstraße* as site of memory demonstrated that multiple pasts co-exist. Recalling the street's Jewish, Nazi and earlier Prussian pasts suggested a desire to keep the Nazi past prominent in the cityscape, but at the same time to move further back in time and remind the public of more positive pasts.

What implications, then, have the above findings for wider debates in German memory politics on the one hand, and for theories of cultural memory on the other?

The phases observed in remembering the Rosenstraße protest do not simply correspond to those previously identified in other studies of German memory. They suggest rather that remembering the past is more fractured and fluid than hitherto assumed. For instance, whilst discourses of the mid to late 1990s focused on issues of German guilt and perpetration, the shift towards victimhood and suffering was already present in representations of the protest. Moreover, key themes identified, including the re-emergence of notions of German-Jewish socio-cultural symbiosis, the re-imagining of society under Nazism as one of shared opposition to the regime, and attention to German suffering and empathy with ordinary Germans have all appeared in cultural representations since the beginning of the 1990s, and arguably remain important features of national self-understanding.

The unfolding story of Rosenstraße also indicates that since unification, and more specifically from the mid-1990s in particular, ambiguous, complex and nuanced narratives have emerged. This corroborates Bill Niven's finding that it has become possible since unification for memories of the Nazi past to become more inclusive, and for a wider range of perpetrators, opponents, victims and bystanders to be integrated into national collective self-understanding.⁶⁷⁸ Narratives such as Rosenstraße, which enable existing assumptions about the past and about constructions of identity, both German and Jewish, to be questioned, have served an important function in facilitating a more complex understanding of the past, reflecting desire to generate an inclusive remembering, without either blurring or distracting from historical accountability.

It also seems likely that, whilst the Nazi past will remain an integral part of collective memory and identity construction, increasingly there will be a shift further back to earlier periods in time which offer possibilities for a positive self-understanding embracing socio-cultural diversity and tolerance.

⁶⁷⁸ Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past*, p.5.

This study also suggests a need to reconsider trends in generational remembering more closely within German memory debates. The interaction between memories of different age groupings within the one broader generational category have so far been overlooked. Whilst elder members of the first generation were instrumental in informing and influencing cultural and historical representations, younger members of the first generation, those who were children at the time, have played less of a role. This is now liable to change, and we should be aware that Germany's collective memory may yet experience modification by the remaining members of the first, experiential generation, before their living memory inevitably gives way to post-memorial engagement. Questions also remain about the complex dynamics and interaction in remembering by members of the second and third generation, how these influence what is remembered, to what ends, and how this is tied to notions of and desires around generational identity. Whether the pattern identified in this thesis, which suggests the third generation may resent the second generation's stance on the Nazi past, is reflected in other narratives that have become prominent in the same period, is a matter for further research.

In addition to its implications for wider debates in German memory politics, my study has attempted to contribute to understanding of cultural memory theory. It has shown that whilst memories are socially constructed they are also multi-layered and inter-related, that they interact with, complement, promote and sustain one another. Memories in one medium relate to and overlap with one another; whilst memories are multiple and conflicting, they are also fluid. This can be seen in the ways the different media of memory examined here have drawn on and influenced each other, an example being the impact of historical research and debate, discussed in Chapter 2, on the later editions of Gernot Jochheim's popular history examined in Chapter 3. Similarly, the influence of both can be found in Schröder's text discussed in Chapter 4. The parallels between von Trotta's film and Jochheim's work provide a further example of such cross-media transfer, whilst the development of the various memorials examined in Chapter 6 illustrate how memories can be developed in this way, but how the one medium can prompt further engagement within the same field. The presence of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture, for example, drew attention to the events and provided a catalyst for further memorial investment, furthering remembrance of the protest.

My study has suggested that even though memories and their meaning alter they are nevertheless perpetuated over time and across different media of memory. Hence, when we examine the ways in which past events are remembered, we need to consider that memory is part of a continuously developing process. As I suggested at the outset, whilst it is necessary to ask what is remembered, when, how and by whom, it is also important to recognise that memories are complex constructions which draw on ideas promoted in prior cultural representations just as much as they are refracted through the socio-political context of their time of production.

2. Indications for the Future Direction of Research into Remembering

In seeking to draw conclusions on the dynamics of remembering the Rosenstraße protest from a range of sources, two further avenues for research have become apparent, namely investigations of patterns of generation remembering in autobiographical memories of former child witnesses, and of the function of social media and digital platforms in remembering and as a vehicle for self-expression.

Taking first the issue of generational remembering, we have already seen, courtesy of von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*, that whilst we talk of generational remembering, the process of change in remembering is more nuanced and fractured than the term suggests. As the majority of the first experiential generation pass away, it seems that its remaining members, specifically those who were younger teenagers and children in 1943, have begun to articulate their own memories, thus opening up a new avenue for analysis. We have already found evidence of this in the Topography of Terror's updated exhibition in Niederkirchnerstraße, for example, as discussed in Chapter 6. In addition, there is also the recent autobiography by Rita J. Kuhn, who was detained in Rosenstraße at the age of 15, and whose memoirs were first published in the United States in November 2012, and republished three months later to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the events.⁶⁷⁹ Although she had previously given testimony to historians and journalists alike, Kuhn now offered her own version of the events of her childhood. In so doing

⁶⁷⁹ Kuhn, R. J., 2012. *Broken Glass, Broken Lives: A Jewish Girl's Survival Story in Berlin, 1933-1945*. Piedmont: Barany Publishing.

she added to the existing cultural representations, and raised further questions. We are prompted to ask why she has spoken out now and why not before. May we consider whether the delay is a result of childhood trauma belatedly re-surfacing, in some similarity with the plot of von Trotta's *Rosenstraße*? Or is it because the death of older participants has enabled younger members of the first experiential generation to find their own voice, to challenge the status quo? Each age grouping reconfigures its understanding of the past anew, and it is possible to see a variation of this process reflected in patterns of cultural remembering: here the younger members of the experiential generation can be seen as attempting to determine the way in which their past is remembered – wresting it perhaps as much from the recollections of their own forebears as from the subsequent cultural representations. This raises questions about what will be remembered in future, what its implications will be for the way in which the protest is remembered and for constructions of identity. Will we, for example, see a shift back towards interpretation that the protest forced the regime to concede and release the detainees, or will it provide evidence of a widening gulf between official and private memories?

As an émigré to the United States, Kuhn has spent her adult life away from Germany. How, we should reflect, has this impacted on the way her memories are refracted, and her own identity is predicated? Whilst the representations examined in this thesis were framed by the changing socio-political context in Germany, Kuhn's autobiography has been shaped by that of the United States and Holocaust discourses there. If Kuhn's autobiography is negotiated in the context of the dominant historical discourses of her adopted homeland, what different insights may this offer? These questions warrant further exploration and analysis at this important juncture in which the last members of the first experiential generation are articulating their memories before they will inevitably give way to a post-memorial engagement with the events.

In addition to autobiography, the recent turn towards social media engagement in remembering offers a further avenue for exploration and analysis, one which may yield an insight into what aspects of the *Rosenstraße* narrative Germans today deem important, and what this in turn indicates about the values and ideals of society in the current decade. As I highlighted in Chapter 6, social media have been introduced in this the 70th anniversary year as a new means of public engagement in the commemorative

process, with a Facebook page dedicated to remembering the protest. In addition, in the online content of various newspapers, the comments sections of various broadsheets carrying articles on the protest provide a further means for public engagement, as also seen earlier this year. Whilst cultural memories have long been determined by historians, politicians and cultural entrepreneurs, the digital age allows for a broadening of the patterns and means of memory construction. By analysing the responses and ideas expressed via social media sites, further research will be able to assess whether ideas in the existing historical debate and various cultural representations examined here have permeated through to the general public, by seeing what is considered important and what not. Such an analysis would provide an insight into contemporary remembering and self-perception as well as into the transfer between cultural memory and everyday public perception of the past. What is certain is that social media and digital platforms allow for greater diversification in remembering the past and give insight into its role in self-expression. There may yet be a return to the narrative of a successful protest, and to the idea of the Jewish fighter figure, found in the post-1989 rhetoric, particularly as both Germany and Europe are again witnessing resurgence in right-wing extremism, from the political activities of Golden Dawn in Greece to the trial of NSU activist Beate Zschäpe in Munich. This has prompted calls for a new debate about racism, but has also brought issues of identity back into public awareness, making narratives such as that of the Rosenstraße protest particularly pertinent.

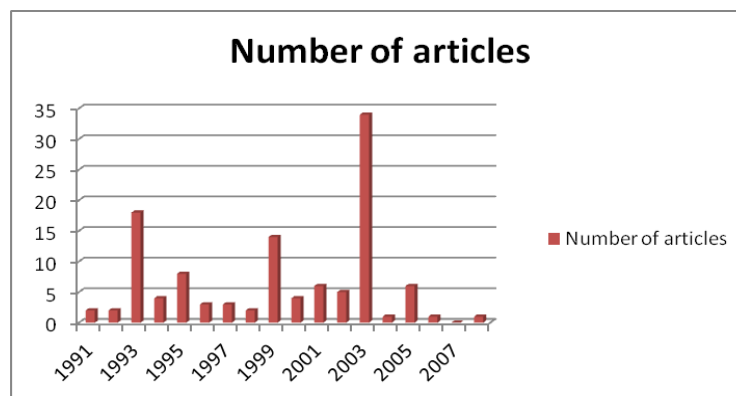
Whilst competing memory of the protest will remain contentious as well as politicised, with public engagement through social media, it seems it is likely to diversify in ways not yet fully anticipated, but which nevertheless will warrant further attention.

Appendices

These appendices highlight the development of interest in the Rosenstraße protest as illustrated by the German press. The aim of their inclusion is to supplement and illustrate the arguments raised in the chapters.

Appendix 1.1

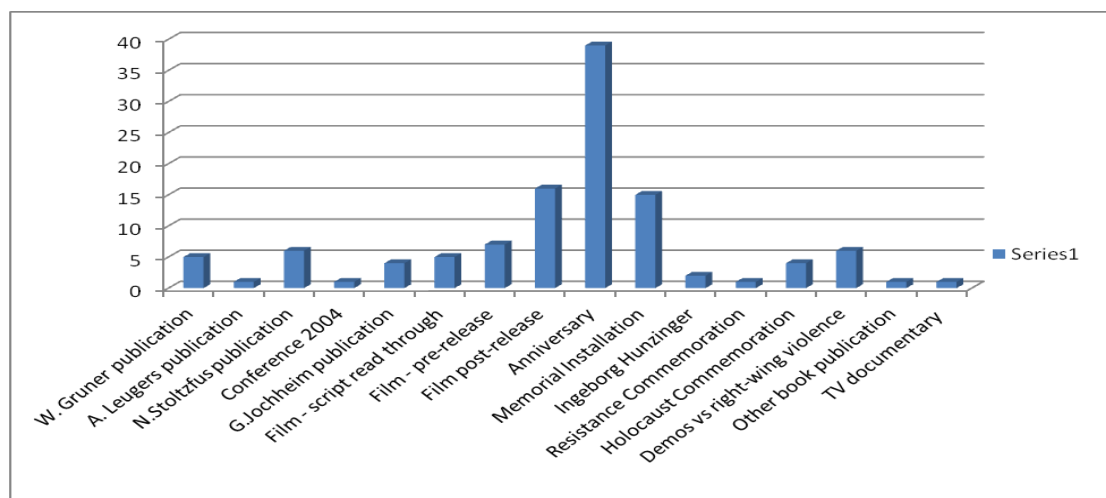
Appendix 1.1 shows the frequency by year with which the protest has appeared in the German press. Articles in this case are defined as in-depth reports, which focus on the historical events, or their subsequent representation. It excludes short articles, e.g. notification of commemorative ceremonies. It includes a range of German newspapers, (see appendix 1.3) but excludes Austrian or Swiss press, which have not demonstrated an interest in the Rosenstraße protest. This appendix highlights how press interest peaked first in 1993 and again in 2003 in the 50th and 60th anniversary years. The number of articles was also comparatively high in 1999. This can be attributed to interest generated by the installation of the Topography of Terror's Permanent Exhibition in Rosenstraße that was installed in March of that year, shortly after the 56th anniversary. Interest has ebbed in the intervening years.



Year	Number of articles
1991	2
1992	2
1993	18
1994	4
1995	8
1996	3
1997	3
1998	2
1999	14
2000	4
2001	6
2002	5
2003	34
2004	1
2005	6
2006	1
2007	0
2008	1

Appendix 1.2

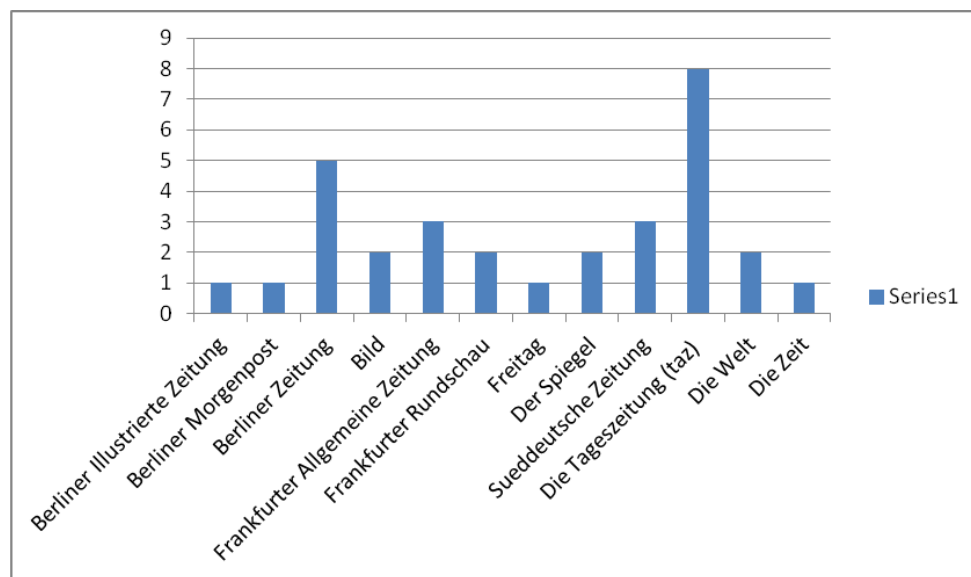
Appendix 1.2 provides a breakdown of articles by thematic focus. The themes are derived from an analysis of the article contents with the aim of identifying what perspectives and who generated the most interest. The order in this graph has been chosen to reflect the chapter content and sequence of this thesis. This illuminates a number of interesting factors. Where articles focus on historians, they tend to focus primarily on Wolf Gruner and to a lesser extent Nathan Stoltzfus and Antonia Leugers. Whilst Gernot Jochheim's popular history receives some attention, by contrast Nina Schröder's biography does not appear to have generated any press interest on its own account. By far the highest level of interest is generated in relation to the anniversaries and memorialisation of the protest, and to a lesser extent in relation to broader Holocaust as well as resistance commemoration. Lastly, it shows that Margarethe von Trotta's *Rosenstraße* also generated a considerable degree of interest.



Thematic Focus	Number of articles
W. Gruner publication	5
A. Leugers publication	1
N.Stoltzfus publication	6
Conference 2004	1
G.Jochheim publication	4
Film - script read through	5
Film - pre-release	7
Film post-release	16
Anniversary	39
Memorial Installation	15
Ingeborg Hunzinger	2
Resistance Commemoration	1
Holocaust Commemoration	4
Demos vs right-wing violence	6
Other book publication	1
TV documentary	1

Appendix 1.3

Appendix 1.3 lists the papers and news magazines that showed an interest in the Rosenstraße protest in the first half of the 1990s. This illustrates how the subject featured repeatedly, particularly in 1993, its 50th anniversary year, and in 1995 to mark the installation of Ingeborg Hunzinger's memorial sculpture. As in Appendix 1.2 it includes in-depth articles but excludes short ones, e.g. announcements. It shows that the subject was favoured primarily by local Berlin newspapers and those with a left-liberal focus whereas the more conservative papers tended to pay less attention to it. News magazines such as *Focus*, and Austrian and Swiss papers showed no interest as far as my research has established. The papers are arranged alphabetically.



Newspaper	Number of articles
Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung	1
Berliner Morgenpost	1
Berliner Zeitung	5
Bild	2
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	3
Frankfurter Rundschau	2
Freitag	1
Der Spiegel	2
Sueddeutsche Zeitung	3
Die Tageszeitung (taz)	8
Die Welt	2
Die Zeit	1

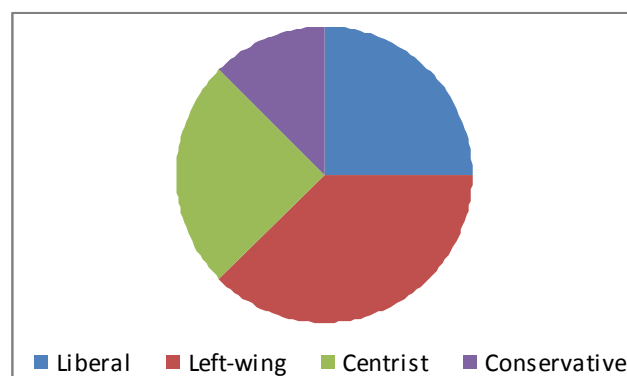
Appendix 1.4a

Appendix 1.4a lists the newspapers that demonstrated an interest in the Rosenstraße protest following the publication of Wolf Gruner's 2002 article, in which he set out in detail why the protest did not succeed. The papers are organised by name, and their political leanings listed according to information provided by the World Press Organisation.

Newspapers	Political Leanings
Berliner Morgenpost	Centrist
Berliner Zeitung	Liberal
Freitag	Left-wing
Junge Welt	Left-wing
Der Spiegel	Liberal
Der Tagesspiegel	Centrist
Die Tageszeitung (taz)	Left-wing
Die Welt	Conservative

Appendix 1.4b

Appendix 1.4b shows the newspapers' political leanings as a percentage share of the press attention. As with the findings in 1.3, this demonstrates that the Rosenstraße protest tends to be a greater pre-occupation amongst the left-liberal press (totalling 62.5%, or 37.5% liberal and 25% left-wing), than at the centrist and conservative end of the spectrum (totalling 37.5%, or 25% centrist, and 12.5% conservative) in the period from December 2002 to March 2003. Interest in the protest once again declined after the anniversary had passed, until it was re-ignited by the release of Margarethe von Trotta's film.



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Interviews

During the course of my research I conducted several interviews. I have listed these below:

Dr Claudia Schoppmann, at the Memorial to German Resistance, Berlin,
17th July 2006

Dr. Wolf Gruner, at Hackescher Markt, Berlin,
18th July 2006

Prof. Dr Johannes Tuchel, at the Memorial to German Resistance, Berlin,
18th July 2006

Dr Gabriele Camphausen, at the Archive for the Files of the State Security Service of the German Democratic Republic (BstU), Berlin, 25th July 2006

Archive Sources

- i) Archive Material at the Archive for the Files of the State Security Service of the German Democratic Republic (BstU), Berlin, *MfS, Ast, I-7163 G.A.*
Band 30- 48

In 1963 the GDR indicted the then Federal State Secretary, Dr. Hans Josef Maria Globke, for Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes committed between 1932 and 1945. He was tried and found guilty in absentia. In the process of trial preparation, several hundred survivor testimonies were gathered. These included references to the Rosenstraße protest and the protest at Große Hamburger Straße.

Copies of these testimonies were made available to the author of this thesis, Dr Beate Kosmala, at the Memorial to German Resistance, Berlin between 19.7.06 – 28.07.06.

- ii) Archive Material at the *Centrum Judaicum* Archive, (CJA) at the New Synagogue, Oranienburgerstraße, Berlin

Bestand 4.1, *Kartei von Anträgern auf eine Anerkennung als „Opfer des Faschismus“/ „Opfer der Nürnberger Gesetzgebung“* (B, P and U)

This collection contains over 30,000 index files relating to applications for the status of Victim of Fascism / Victim of the Nuremberg Laws Status. The process of formally recognising Nazism's racially persecuted victims began in June 1945. Initially this status was reserved to surviving family members of individuals who died in the concentration camps, concentration camp survivors, so-called Illegals who had evaded deportation and anyone forced to wear the Star of David. So-called partial Jews were only recognised as Victims of Fascism if they had been drawn into one of the forced

labour programmes, such as Organisation Todt. In February 1950 the GDR issued new legislation regarding the recognition of victim status, known as *Verfolgte des Naziregimes VdN*, organised by the Union of Victims of Nazism *Vereinigung des Verfolgten des Naziregimes, VVN*. The status of existing recipients as well as new applicants was reviewed and in many cases the status withdrawn. These files were handed over to the CJA between 1989 and 1990.

In the course of my research, I examined the files listed alphabetically under B and P and the application submitted by Heinz Ullstein.

iii) Archive Material at the Wiener Library, London

Following an appeal for witnesses in 1955 via an announcement in the *Berliner Jüdische Allgemeine Wochenzeitung* (listed in the bibliography), a small number of testimonies were recorded and archived at the Wiener Library, London. These are available to view on microfilm, under the following references:

049-EA-0663 / P.III.b.No.860
049-EA-0635 / P.III.a.No.202
050-EA-0749 / P.III.d.No.854
051-EA-0761/ P.III.d.No.1097
051-EA-0771 / P.III.e.No.389
051-EA-0773 / P.III.e.No.392

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